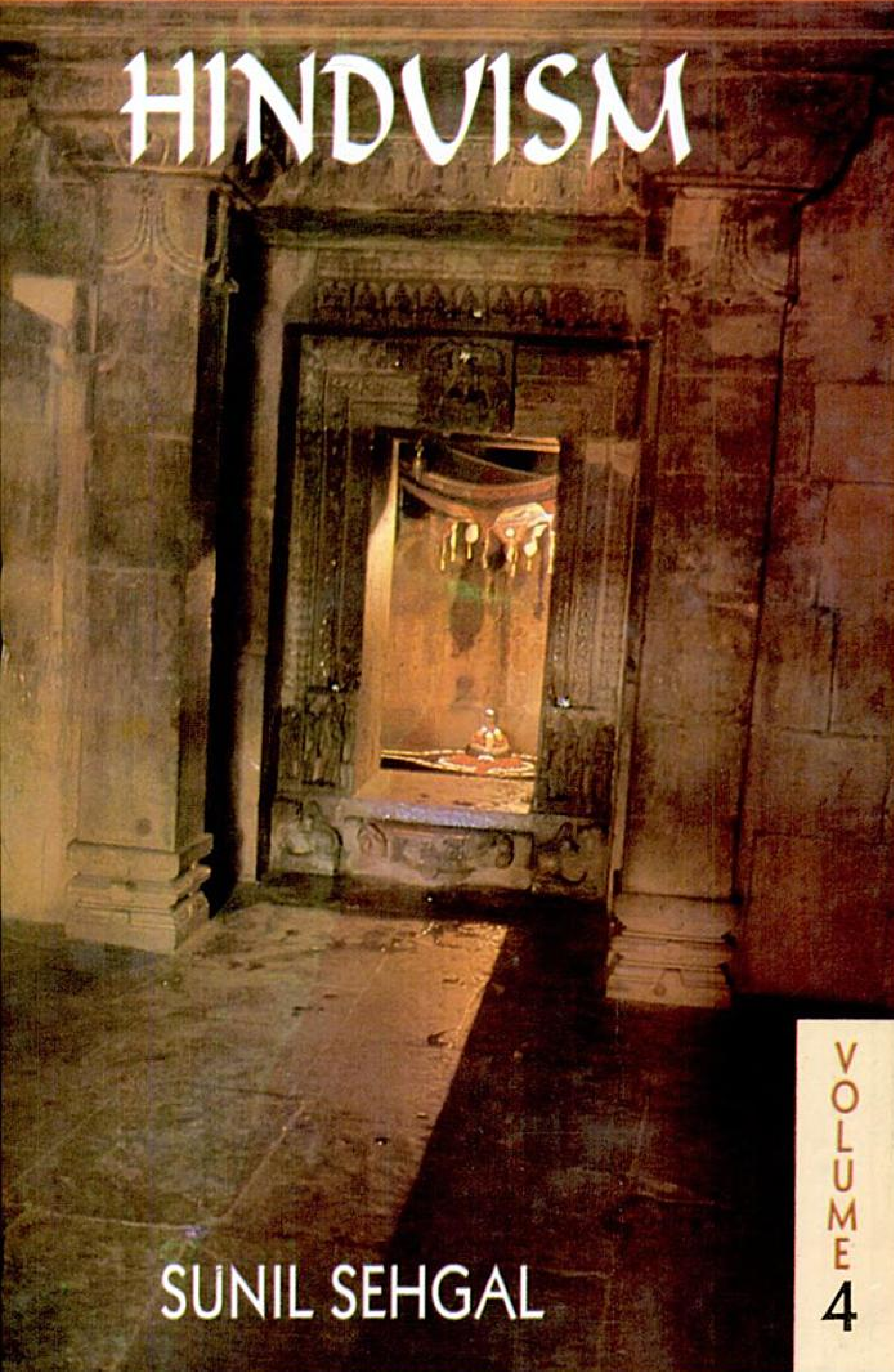
ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF HINDUISM



VOLUME 4

SUNIL SEHGAL

This multivolume Encyclopaedia is a pioneering attempt to bring together all aspects of Hinduism and contains so many multifarious things to afford us an insight into the deepest depths of the soul of Hinduism. This encyclopaedia is essentially a compilation of the terms and concepts covering various aspects of Hinduism. Many words borrowed for more general usage have been endowed with very special meaning. This encyclopaedia has been compiled, edited and arranged in alphabetical order by a keen scholar of Hinduism. In this encyclopaedia, Hinduism as a religion has been distinguished from Hinduism as a social organisation. On the one hand Hinduism regards god as a super fluity while on the other hand it sponsors a deeply emotional theism as the noblest form of religion. In this encyclopaedia, the entries have been represented in a clear and explanatory style to provide both straight forward definitions and invaluable background information. This encyclopaedia includes material from various Indian and foreign sources which has been compiled and edited by the author to make the set interesting.

This encyclopaedia is for the benefits of students, teachers, and research scholars as well as laymen who wish to know the key aspects of Hinduism as a religion as well as also a social organisation.

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Sunil Sehgal

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Preface

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R

Radha (*prosperity*)

Origin Hindu (Epic and Puranic) [India]. Goddess of emotional love.

Known period of worship circa 1000 BC and earlier until present day.

Synonyms Bhumidevi [southern India].

Centre (s) of cult none.

Art references virtually none.

Literary sources later Puranic literature the works of Vidyapati (1352-1448), including the *Brahma-vaivarta-purana.*

Radha is a goddess whose role is limited to that of a favoured mistress of Krsna. She only emerges fully as a goddess from the twelfth century AD onwards and she is one of the central figures in the poetry of Vidyapati, who places her as a cosmic queen. One of the creation accounts describes how Krsna divides himself into two parts, one of which is Radha. They make love for an age and their sweat and heavy breathing become the world's oceans and winds. Radha gives birth to the golden egg of the universe, which floats on the primal waters for a year until the god Visnu emerges. Other mythology accounts that Radha enjoys an illict relationship with an adolescent Krsna. Their tryst is set in the village of Vraja and in the surrounding forests at a time before Krsna takes as his consort Rukmini and later Satyabhama.

Radha is sometimes considered to be an *avatara* of Laksmi and

thus a consort of Krsna, and in southern India, as Bhumidevi, she becomes associated with Sarasvati. She always stands as the personification of emotional love in stark contrast Sati, the faithful and legitmate consort of Visnu's other *avatara*, Rama. In the *bhakti* cult she symbolizes the yearning of the human soul to be drawn to Krsna. Attribute : a lotus.

Rahu (*seizer*)

Primordial cosmic deity Hindu. The son of Kasyapa or Rudra, according to legend he seizes the sun and moon to generats eclipses. Rahu is depicted with four hands and a tail, or as a head alone, his body having been destroyed by Visnu. He stands unfit a lion or in a chariot drawn by eight black horses. Colour: dark blue. Attributes: half moon, knife, sword and trident.

Rajamatangi

Goddess Hindu. She stands upon a lotus. Attributes: blue lotus, lute, moon and parrot.

Raja Yoga

Raja Yoga in essence is a very scientific path of God-realization. In this path, God is more or less treated as *Pure Energy*. Sage Patanjali, the author of the *Yoga Sutras*, was the first to systematise the practices of this technical Yoga.

Patanjali defined *Yoga as Citta-Vritti-Nirodha.*

Yoga — means union with the divine or Salvation.

Chitta — means Mind.

Vritti — means Modiffications or Vibrations.

Nirodha — means Stoppage or Suppression or Restraint.

So according to Sage Patanjali, "The union with the Divine or salvation means stoppage of the vibrations or modifications of the mind." As per Patanjali, modifications of the mind are fivefold and are painful or non-painful in nature. They are *Right Knowledge*, *Wrong Knowledge*, *Fancy*, *Sleep* and *Memory*.

The practice of Raja Yoga started from the Vedic age. The

Bhagavad Gita glorifies and recommends it by starting with a statement, "Raja Yoga, Raja Guhyam (kingly guarded secret), Pavitram (the most purified), Uttamam (the best), Pratyakshavagamam (immediate result giving), Dharmyam-Kartum (steadfast to Dharma),...", Bhagavad Gita, Chap 9-2).

In Raja Yoga, a devotee tries to achieve a *state above the mind* and in a way tries to achieve a *mindless state*. It is very difficult to explain it is simple terms. A student of parapsychology may be able to understand the scientific aspect of Raja Yoga better than anyone else. The ordinary man whose consciousness is confined to the lower mind can conceive of only concrete images of objects, which are derived through the sense- organs. In a nutshell, for a perfected Raja Yogi, thinking is a voluntary process all the time, unlike most of us who think so many things involuntarily. We think about the pros and cons of every issue, even if we do not want to think about the issue at all. For example, if we decide not to think of monkeys for the next hour, we will be thinking about monkeys only for the next hour. That is the way the mind works all the time.

The Patanjali Yoga Sutra consists of 196 slokas. In his book, Patanjali has never stated or mentioned that this is the only way for God-realization, os much so that the state of mind as well as God-orealization which he expounds can be achieved by other religious practices also.

Raja Yoga mentions eight kinds of disciplines:

Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

Yama—means Abstinence from all vices.

Niyama—means Observance of purity, contentment, etc.

Asana-means a posture suitable for meditation. Pranayama -consists of prolonged expiration (Rechaka); Inspiration (Purakha); Retention (Kumbhaka) of breath. This exercise is supposed to be done only under the proper guidance of a realized master or Guru. In the Pranayama exercise, the devotee is supposed to control the vital currents in the body.

Pratyahara-means retraction or withdrawal of sense-organs from sense-objects.

Dharana—means the fixing of mind on any object.

Dhyana—means meditation.

Samadhi-is the final state. He who meditates ultimately attains Samadhi. In that state, the mind loses its complete identity and assumes a formless state, even though it can assume the form of any object it contemplates on. In Samadhi, the devotee realises the ultimate truth. *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* and *Savikalpa Samadhi* are the two types of Samadhis devotees attain in their divine pursuit.

Raka

Minor goddess of prosperity. Hindu (Vedic). Associated with the acquisition of wealth.

Rakta-Yamari (*red Yamari*)

God. Buddhist. An emanation of Aksobhya and a variety of Yamari. Colour: red.

Ramayana

Our first national epic, the Ramayana, has an all-time universal appeal and relevance. In its intrinsic value it transcends all the boundries—subtle and physical. It has percolated our national life at various levels, in one form or the other. The reading of the book provides a great religious, literary and philosophical experience through which one would like to pass again and again. Our ancient-most cultural spirit, national genius and ambitios are embodied and enshrined in it with all their strength and limitations which make it our magnum opus and the cause celebre. The Ramayana has bee a perennial source of inspiration to poets, painters, philosophers, performing artists, religious heads and laymen.

There are so many facets, like that of a jewel of the first water, which contribute to its popularity and global appeal, but perhaps the most important single factor is its galaxy of characters-Rama, *Sita, Hanuman, Lakshmana* ...whenever we are assailed by doubts,

surrounded by grim realities, attacked by frustrations, confronted with national or moral crisis, these characters carry the torch to lead us to dharma and duty. It is both very simple and very complex. As no on dips one's had twice in the same river, so none reads the same Ramayana again and again, or no two readers read the same book. As one reads and re-reads, the subtler shades of meaning are revealed, bearing deeper relevance to our day-to-day struggles and strivings.

As there is no end to Rama, so is the story about him endless, it is innumerable. The first poet Valmiki sang the first Ramayana in Sanskrit about 3,500 years or so back. Since then it has been retold and sung, time and again, in prose and verse, down these centuries in various Indian and foreign languages. The story of Rama provides wings to every reader or listener's imagination, on which he or she can fly to an altogether different realms, and there he or she can create his own Ramayana.

Ramayana

The two famous Epics or Ithihasas are the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Sage Valmiki wrote the former and sage Veda Vyasa, son of sage Parasara, wrote the latter.

The story about sage Valmiki is in the Uttara Kanda, a supplement to the great Ramayana epic.

In the early part of his life, sage Valmiki was a highway robber with no name. He used to rob travellers to support his wife and children. One day the great saint Narada was passing by and the robber attacked the holy man. Narada asked Valmiki, why he (Valmiki) is robbing him (Narada)?... "To take care of my family," answered the robber. "When you rob a person, you also incur a lot of sin. Would your family share that sin also," asked the great master. "I am sure they will," answered the robber. "All right," said the sage. "Why don't you tie me up here and go back home, ask every one, whether they are ready to share your sins along with the money you are bringing home." The robber agreed. He tied the sage against a tree and ran to his simple home. There he accosted all the members of his family with the question, "Will

you share my sins?" All the members of his family, including his wife said an emphatic "NO". For the first time in his life, the robber understood the truth.. With tears trickling down on his cheeks he ran to sage Narada and begged for his forgiveness. The sage taught the robber how to worship God. It is said that the robber was so engrossed in meditation that ants built ant-hills surrounding him. Finally after years, it is said, a voice came from nowhere, asking the meditating robber to get up from his meditation and the voice named him Valmiki, meaning he that was born in the ant-hill. This is the story of Valmiki.

Once the saint Valmiki was walking through a forest, saw two doves romantically involved with each other. As the sage was engrossed in that pleasant sight, a cruel arrow passed by him and struck the male dove. The female dove went down in remorse and started chirping around the dead companion. The sage saw the hunter and called him a wretch. Immediately Valmiki felt, as a saint he should not have spoken like that. Then a voice from the sky said: "Oh! Valmiki, your words are poetic, don't be distressed. This is the right time for you to write the story of Lord Rama." Upon the instructions from that voice from the sky, Valmiki wrote the immortal poem Ramayana, the story of Lord Rama. Sage Valmiki wrote the whole Ramayana, as the narration to him by the crying female dove. In the beginning of each chapter he makes the reader aware of the fact that it is a crying bird which is narrating this great story of Lord Rama.

In brief, Ramayana is the story of Lord Rama and princess Sita. It is a poem with 24,000 couplets. The story in brief is as follows. Once upon a time, there was a king named Dasaratha who had three wives, namely, Kausalya, Kaikeyi and Sumitra. Unluckily Dasaratha had no children through any of the three queens. So he conducted a special sacrifice by name *Puthra Kameshti Yagam.* Out of the fire of the sacrifice came an elixir which all the three queens consumed. As a result, queen Kausalya had a son named Rama, queen Kaikeyi had a son named Bharata, queen Sumitra had two sons named Lakshmana and *Shatrughna.* Rama and Lakshmana became very fast friends from childhood onwards and so too Bharata and Shatrughna. When the children attained puberty,

Rama married princess Sita, the orphan daughter of the great King Janaka. Thereupon, King Dasaratha thought of renouncing the throne and making prince Rama the king. The whole country rejoiced at the neews, except queen Kaikeyi and her maid Mandara. Finally jealousy of queen Kaikeyi made Rama to give up the kingdom and seek the jungles along with his sweet wife Sita and his beloved brother Lakshmana. In the jungles, poor Sita was kidnapped by Ravana, the demon king of Sri Lanka. Lord Rama went to rescue her with the aid of monkey King Sugreeva and his prime minister Hanuman. In a great battle, Ram annihilated Ravana and his army. Rama along with princess Sita finally returned to the kingdom of Ayodhya. Ramayana is a very cherished poem of the Hindus. The holy Deepavali festival is a celebration of the victory of Rama over demon-king Ravana. Deepavali or Diwali—The Festival of lights is celebrated throughout India. Rama is an avatar of Lord Vishnu and Ramayana is a story which projects the Hindu ideals of life. Rama is the perfect man and husband and Sita is the perfect wife and Lakshmana is the perfect brother. There are many versions of Ramayana. The Hindi version is written by sage *Tulasi Das*. The Malayalam version is written by *Thunchath Ezuthachan*. The original text of Ramayana is written in a very stylish Sanskrit language.

The Ramayana, composed by rishi and Adi-kavi Valmiki, is an epic of unknown antiquity, but some scholars suppose it to have been created about five centuries B.C. All other Ramayanas and versions including that of Tulsidas (Hindi), and Kamban (Tamil), equally sublime in merit, are based on the original epic of Valmiki. The other well known Ramayana is Krittivasa Ramayana (Bengali). The main message of all these versions have always been the same—the upholding of duty and dharma, and sustenance of order. The Ramayana, a reflection of the highest Hindu ideals, is a sublime textbook of morals and ethics, which has inspired millions and millions of Hindus from time immemorial. It is possessed of many unique facets from which emerge and diffuse the splendid rays of human values and ideals. It has rightly been said that, "As long as the mountains stand and the rivers flow so long shall the Ramayana be cherished among men and save them

from sin''.

The Story of Rama

Once, long long ago, the sage and Adi-kavi Valmiki came to the banks of the river Tamasa for his morning ablutions. There he saw a pair of curlews sporting amorously. Then, there came a fowler and shot the male bird dead with his arrow. Seeing the male bird dead and his mate wailing pitiously, the Rishi's heart was moved with deep compassion and he cursed the fowler. The curse was uttered in even measure and equal feet, and thus the Shloka was born out of sorrow.

Valmiki returned to his ashrama, but the Shloka continued to revolve in his mind. Just then Brahma, the four-faced Creator appeared in person, and told Valmiki to relate the entire story, the heroic exploits of Rama in verse, for he himself has inspired that poetic utterance. Brahma blessed the sage with the vision that had happened in public or privately in Rama's life, and told him that nothing he related would be untrue, and that as long as the rivers and the mountains were there on the earth, so long would the Rama-story last in the world. Brahma disappeared leaving Valmiki full of awe and wonder. He sang and repeated the Shloka, and then began to compose the Ramayana. He set into deep meditation and envisioned all that had happened in the life of Lord Rama. He saw everything with the eye of his mind as one would behold a fruit held on one's palm.

The Ramayana is Composed

He composed the entire Rama katha in the verse form so ravishing to the ear and mind, and so full of noble deeds and thoughts as the ocean is full of rare gems. Having composed the Ramayana in the epic form of twentyfour thousand verses, he fell wondering as how and by whom it could be propagated throughout the world. As he was musing thus, there came Lava and Kusha, the two young princes, possessed of sweet melodious voice, and well versed in all the sacred lore. He taught them the great epic and bade them to recite the same to the accompaniment of Veena. They sang the story before the learned audience and the assembly of receptive

people. They would hear with rapt attention, with their hearts full of joy and the eyes pearld with tears. Once Rama chanced to see these honey-tongued princes recite the sacred lay, and invited them to sing it in his august court. There they recited the entire epic before the whole royal audience.

Dasharatha's Ayodhya

The famed and fair Ayodhya, the capital city of the kingdom of Koshala, stood on the banks of the sacred Saryu river. It was unconquerable by war or weapon. There ruled Dasharatha, the illustrious king of the solar race. Ayodhya rivalled Indra's Amravati in opulence and beauty. The king ruled over his righteous subjects with the help of his wise ministers and counsellors. But the king felt sad on the score that he had no son to continue the line and inherit the kingdom. It gnawed into his vitals. One day he decided to perform the Horse Sacrifice to obtain a son with the wise assistance and guidance of the priests and the counsellors. He invited Rishyashringa, the best of the rishis, to preside over the sacrifice. The next year in the spring, season, the Ashvamedha sacrifice began under the guidance of Rishyashringa and Vashishtha. Consequently, Dasharatha received the boon of four sons, and it exceedingly delighted his heart and those of his three Queens.

The Princes are Born

Six season and eleven months had gone by, and then in the twelfth month of Chaitra, in the very auspicious zodiacal signs, the eldest queen Kaushalya gave birth to Rama, the lotus-eyed and long-armed prince. And queen kaikeyi gave birth to righteous Bharata, and the youngest queen Sumitra to twin sons Lakshmana and Shatrughna, possessed of one-quarter of Lord Vishnu's essence. There were great rejoicings and festivities at their birth. Soon the four princes grew into heroes and valiant fighters and mastered the Vedas and other scriptures. The king immensely rejoiced in these and thought of their marriage, as they stood on the threshold of manhood.

One day, Vishvamitra, a great rishi came to Dasharatha and asked a

favour of sending with him Rama and Lakshmana to protect his sacrifice from the demons. The two demons Maricha and Subahu spoiled and polluted his sacrifice urged by Ravana. Dasharatha was not ready to send the two princes with the sage for such a dangerous enterprise. The King instead offered his services and those of his army, but Vishvamitra insisted on taking away Rama, for only he could destroy the demons. Vishvamitra assured the king of Rama's certain victory and their safe return. Vashistha advised Dasharatha to send Rama with Vishvamitra, as no harm could come to the prince under the sage's protection, and moreover Rama himself was more than a match to these devils.

The Initiation of Marriage

Vashistha blessed, and Dasharatha smelt the head of Rama and Lakshmana and committed them to the sage's care. Armed with bows and arrows, they followed the sage. When they reached the southern bank of the river Saryu, Vashistha taught the princes some spells to overcome hunger, fatigue, disease and old age. Having mastered the mantras, Rama shone like the aurumnal sun. Soon they reached a dark, deep and fearful forest, and there Rama slew the sinful demoness Tadaka at Vishvamitra's behest. Soon they arrived at Siddha Ashrama, the hermitage of Vishvamitra. The next day, the sacrifice began while the princes kept the vigil. The sacrifice progressed smoothly for five days, but on the sixth day at once a terrible noise arose accompanied by deep darkness, and Maricha and Subahu came sweeping down to spoil the sacrifice. They rained blood, marrow and bones on the altar, but soon Rama slew Subahu and hurled Maricha headlong into the sea, a hundred yojanas away without killing him. Having achieved their object of overcoming the demons and the successful completion of the sacrifice, the princes went to Mithila, the capital of Raja Janaka, led by their guru Vishvamitra. There the guru wanted to show his two royal disciples the famed and wonderful bow of Lord Shiva, which none had been able to raise and string

They set out for Mithila to witness the wonderful and mighty bow, and Janaka's great sacrifice. During the journey, Vishvamitra told the princes many interesting ancient stories and legends. When

they reached the out skirts of the city, they beheld a beautiful but deserted ashrama of rishi Gautama. There Rama redeemed Gautama's wife Ahalya of the curse under which she had been lying unseen and invisible to the eye of men and the gods.

Janaka received Vishvamitra with great honour due to him. Vishvamitra introduced the two princes, and requested the king to show them the mighty bow of Shiva, which Janaka did with a very glad heart. The bow was brought on the eight-wheeled cart dragged by five thousand powerful men. Relating how he came to possess that wonderful bow, Janaka told them how the gods, gandharavas, demons and mighty kings and princes had failed to string it, and how he had resolved to bestow his beloved daughter Sita only on him who bowed and bent the bow. With the permission of Janaka and the blessings of his guru, Rama took out the bow from its chest, and tried to draw and string it. Rama bent and strung it effortlessly in full view of all the spectators till at last it broke into two, snapping from the middle. It mightily gladdened the hearts of all the people of Mithila, and fast messengers were sent to Ayodhya with the happy tidings of Rama's marriage. King Dasharatha arrived accompanied by his mighty army, ministers, priests and others. Sita's hand was placed in that of Rama in marriage. Bharata, Lakshmana and Shatrughna were also married then and there to the princesses Mandvi, Urmila and Shrutakirati respectively.

Dashratha's Desire

Dashratha loved his four sons more than his own life, but Rama was the dearest, for his excellent qualities of head and heart. He decided to install Rama as the heir-apparent and crown-prince. He wanted to see the virtuous Rama as the King before he died. In consultation with the guru Vashistha, ministers, priests, other wise people and the public, Rama's installation as the Regent Prince was decided, and the grand preparations were ordered. The decision sent a rapturous wave through the hearts of the entire kingdom, but the maid Manthara was an exception. She was the favourite maid-attendant of the queen Kaikeyi. When the hunch- backed maid came to know about Rama's installation on the throne, she

rushed to Kaikeyi burning with jealousy, and poisoned her ears by her malicious advice. At first Kaikeyi resisted her ill-advice, but ultimately gave, in and her jealousy was roused. Then Manthara reminded Kaikeyi of the two boons the King had granted her long ago, and she has reserved them for future. Manthara advised Kaikeyi to ask for the immediate installation of her son Bharata on the throne, and banishment of Rama into the forest for fourteen years.

Kaikeyi in the Wrath-Chamber

Thus advised and beguiled, Kaikeyi rose from her uxurious couch with her burning sighs and resolved to adopt that course of ruin. She, the most loved one, of the wild eyes, went straight to the Chamber of Displeasure and lay there on the bare floor, having thrown away all her jewels and ornaments. In the meantime, Dashatatha came himself to the Kaikeyi's palace to convey the happy news, but finding her not there, and learning that she has betaken herself to the Chamber of Wrath, he rushed thither extremely agitated. Dasharatha addressed her in most loving words and caressed her foundly, but she, bent upon evil, did not respond at all.

When Dasharatha had sworn by Rama and said that he would grant whatever she desired, she felt reassured and said, "Install Bharata on the throne, and send Rama into exile in the Dandaka forest as an ascetic" Stunned by her cruel words, Dasharatha fell into a swoon. When he recovered he prayed Kaikeyi with folded hands not to exile Rama, his very life, but she remained relentless and inexorable. Lamenting bitterly, Dasharatha pleaded in vain with her for mercy. While he writhed in aguish, she kept on taunting him in the name of dharma and righteousness. Sumantra came to inform Dasharatha that everything was ready for Rama's coronation, but the king could not say anything out of profound sorrow. Kaikeyi then sent Sumantra to bring Rama there. Rama immediately drove to Kaikeyi's palace, and was dismayed to find his father sunk in deep gloom and dejection. Rama asked Kaikeyi why the king was in dejection. She shamelessly told Rama about her two boons and asked him to redeem the king's pledges by going into exile for

fourteen years leaving the throne for Bharata.

Rama is Exiled

It deeply grieved Rama that Keikeyi thought he would not obey his father. Rama instantly agreed to go to the forest for fourteen years as a hermit to redeem his father's pledges. Rama went round his unconscious father and Kaikeyi in reverence and hastened to his palace to take leave of his mother. When people came to know about Rama's banishment, they wept and lamented aloud and sank into sorrow. The terrible news struck mother Kaushalya like lightning, and she fell into a swoon. Rame raised her gently, and when she came to her senses Rama prevailed upon her to allow him to go in exile in obedience to his father's command.

Sita insisted to accompany Rama to the forest and said, "O Raghava, if you do not take me with you, I shall take recourse to poison, fire or water to terminate my life." So, Rama agreed to take her with him. Lakshmana also begged Rama with tearful eyes to take him into the exile, and Rama had to agree. They gave away all their wealth, chariots, steeds and other possessions in charity and went to king Dasharatha to bid him final farewell. Dasharatha blessed and reluctantly allowed Rama to repair to the forest. Clad in ascetic' garb, Rama, Lakshmana along with Sita departed for the forest. The celestial weapons they carried dazzled the eyes of the beholders. It was a very painful parting and the earth got drenched with tears. A great number of citizens, including old and venerable Brahmans followed Rama's chariot on foot. So, Rama got down from his chariot and walked on foot. They reached the river Tamasa and spent the night there.

Rama got up early before dawn and finding the people fast asleep, being tired, left the place immediately to spare the people the hardships of the journey. Rama travelled fast and reached the last limits of Koshala. Soon they reached the banks of the sacred river Ganga and decided to spend the night there. There came Guha, the Nishad king to welcome Rama. The next morning Rama bade Guha farewell and crossed Ganga in a boat. Before that Rama had sent back Sumantra, the charioteer, to Ayodhya. Travelling leisurely on foot they arrived at Bhardwaja's hermitage and were

received with great hospitality. The next morning Rama took leave of the sage and set out for Chitrakuta. Having, reached Chitrakuta, Lakshmana built a beautiful hut and they dwelt there for some time.

Dasharatha's Death

Travelling fast, Sumantra, the charioteer returned to Ayodhya with a heavy heart, and found the city ominous, sickly and cheerless. He found the people in groups mourning Rama's departure. Sumantra speedily went to Dasharatha's palace and conveyed to him Rama's salutations and the message. The king overwhelmed with grief fell into a swoon and lay motionless on the ground.

When he recovered, he wept and cried for his exiled son and died soon after at midnight. Ayodhya was plunged in deep sorrow and great confusion. The corpse of the king was embalmed and it was decided that Bharata should be installed king. Swift messengers, on horses were despatched to bring Bharata and Shatrughna from Kekaya, the capital of Bharata's maternal grand father. That night Bharata had a dreadful dream, and so was very much disturbed in spite of himself.

Worried and responding to urgent call from Ayodhya, Bharata rode with speed. On the way he met many ominous signs and was filled with misgivings. On learning about virtuous Rama's exile and his father's death because of Rama's separation, from his own mother's mouth, he fell down on the earth struck down by grief crying, "Alas, I am undone!" Plunged in fathomless grief, he refused to be crowned and reproached his mother crying piteously. Having performed the funeral rites of his father Dasharatha with all solemnity, Bharata set out for the forest to request Rama to return and to ascend the throne.

Bharata Meets Rama

The army was ordered to march. Bharata drove fast eager to see Rama. The queens, ministers, priests and the citizens in great number accompanied him. They arrived at Sringberpura and were accorded a warm welcome by the Nishad King, Guha. The next day they arrived at saint Bhardwaja's ashrama and spent the night there,

and then set out for Chitrakuta. Bharata went ahead of all and fell down at Rama's lotus feet, with his voice choked with tears. Rama raised Bharata up and embraced him and enquired about Dasharatha's well-being. Bharata told him how their father had expired overcome with grief of Rama's separation, and prayed Rama to return to Ayodhya to occupy the throne, but Rama remained steadfast and inexorable in his vow to remain into exile. Then, Bharata requested Rama for his sandals. Rama took off the sandals and gave them to the noble and high souled Bharata. Bharata bowed before them and then placing them on his head returned to Ayodhya. Bharata placed the sandals under the royal umbrella and administered justice and royal business in Rama's name and led an ascetic's life.

In the meantime Rama left Chitrakuta and visited the sage Atri and his wife Anusuya. Having taken leave of the great ascetic, Rama entered the dense Dandaka Forest as does the sun a great mass of dark clouds. They pressed on, Rama leading, Lakshmana following and Sita walking between them. They met rishis, ascetics and anchorites and spent as many as ten years among them. The ascetics complained against the demons and sought his protection against these night-rangers. Rama along with Sita and Lakshmana visited the hermitages of rishis Sarabhanga and Suitkshna, and finally they came to the great sage Agastya's ashrama. The holiest of the sages, Agastya was greatly delighted to receive Rama and gave him a divine sword and a never failing bow of Vishnu and many celestial arrows.

Sita is Abducted

Finally, Rama came to Panchavati, fascinating spot on the bank of the river Godavari. There Lakshmana raised a pleasant hermitage of ample size with beams of bamboo and thatched it with grass and leaves. There they dwelt happily, and then there came one day Surpanakha, Ravana's sister. She requested Rama to be her lord and husband. Refused by Rama, she turned to Lakshamana and prayed him to make her his wife. This enraged Lakshmana, and he cut off her nose and ears. Bleeding and howling, she fled to Khara, Ravana's younger brother, who ruled in nearby Janasthana. Khara

sent his huge army to destroy Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, but Rama soon slew the entire army with its generals. Then Khara himself set out leading an army of fourteen thousand great warriours. A terrible battle ensued, but then Rama destroyed them all with his deadly arrows.

New, Surpanakha approached Ravana wailing and weeping, and showed him her wounds. Taunting him, she urged Ravana to avenge the death of Khara by abducting sita. She advised him to make beautiful and blameless Sita his wife. Determined to carry off Sita, he went to see Maricha, and asked his help in the abduction of Sita. Maricha tried his best to dissuade Ravana from that evil design, but Ravana remained adamant and threatened Maricha with death in case he refused to help him. Out of fear, Maricha became the bejewelled golden dear and began to frish about at the entrance of Rama's cottage. Sita was fascinated by it and requested Rama either to catch or kill the deer for her. Rama ran after the deer with the bow in his hand. The magic deer led Rama far away. At last Rama let a deadly arrow fly from his mighty bow. It sped like lightning and slew the deer. While dying, Maricha transformed himself into his real self and cried aloud in Rama's voice "Alas Sita! Alas Lakshman!"

Sita heard the distress call and urged Lakshmana to go to Rama's help. She forced Lakshmana to go with many bitter reproaches. Lakshmana knew that Rama was invincible and not in any danger at all, but he was helpless and so, he had to go. When Ravana saw Sita alone and helpless, he came before her in the guise of a mendicant. Sita taking him to be a sage offered water and fruts. Ravana bent upon sin and evil abducted Sita and carried her off forcibly. When Jatayu, the king of the birds saw Ravana thus abducting Sita, he challenged Ravana and fought a fierce battle, but being old Jatayu got at last worsted and Ravana cut off his wings. flanks and feet with his sharp sword. He lay there fatally wounded, and Ravana carried off wailing and weeping Sita. Ravana drove fast in his aerial chariot absorbed in his thoughts. Sita dropped her jewels on the peak of a mountain as a token unoticed by Ravana, when she saw some monkeys there. Ravana kept faultless Sita in the Ashoka Grove in Lanka.

Rama and Lakshmana returned to the ashrama, but found it without Sita. Rama was plunged in sorrow and remained unconsolable. They seacrched Sita in every place but all in vain. Suddenly they found Jatayu, who lay dying in a pool of blood. Jatayu told Rama how Ravana had stolen Sita, and how he tried to rescue Sita and was fatally wounded in the fight. Rama embraced the dying royal bird and then cremated him. Searching Sita, they arrived at Shabari's ashrama. She received them with due courtesies and offered them water and forest fruits. Resuming their journey they arrived on charming Pampa's banks.

Frienship with Sugriva

Soon they reached the Rishyamooka mountain, where dwelt Sugriva with Hanuman and his other ministers. Sugriva was living there in exile, driven out of Kishkindha by his elder brother Vali. Hanuman escorted Rama to Sugriva's presence and they befriended each other. Sugriva told how he was deprived of his dear wife by Vali and was living in exile. He prayed Rama to relieve him from that dread and to restore his wife. In return he promised to recover Sita. Sugriva showed Rama the jewels of Sita which she had dropped there while being carried by Ravana. Rama slew Vali and installed Sugriva on the throne of Kishkindha. The rainy season being over, Sugriva sent monkey hosts in all the directions under mighty leaders for the search. But Sugriva relied more on Hanuman, and gave him some special instructions. Rama also felt that Hanuman would be successful in the enterprise, and so gave him his signet ring as a token.

Hanuman along with Angada and others pressed forward, exploring all the places and arrived at the seashore. There they came to know from Sampati, Jatayu's younger brother that he had seen Sita being carried off to Lanka by Ravana. Lanka was a hundred yojanas across the sea. The monkeys held a debate to ascertain as who of them could leap over to Lanka and come back safely. Each of the great monkegy declared one by one how far he could leap and dare. Thus, the debate went on and finally it was decided that Hanuman was the best choice for the venture. Hanuman got ready and grew into an immense and formidable size. Having resolved, Hanuman

leapt into the sky and landed on the other side of the sea.

Hanuman in Lanka

Hanuman, the foremost of the apes, entered Lanka at night assuming a tiny form. It was a splendid city perched on Trikuta hill, girt with golden walls and wide moats. Hanuman searched every mansion and palace for Sita, but saw her nowhere. He then entered Ravana's royal palace full of lovely princesses and splendour, which looked like the paradise. There he saw Ravana sprawling on a golden bed in sound sleep and beside him on a separate bed, a lovely moon-complexioned lady. She was Mandoari, Ravana's chief queen. Hanuman continued his search and at last reached the Ashoka Grove. There he saw Sita under Ashoka tree, in single soiled cloth. She looked like a tongue of flame obscured by smoke, guarded by fierce Rakshasis.

Hidden behind the thick foliage, Hanuman saw Ravana coming followed by many lovely ladies. He approached Sita and wooed her in many ways, but Sita trembling all this while like a plaintain leaf refused to respond to his love and warned that he was sure to die at Rama's hands soon. It enraged Ravana beyond measure, and he threatened Sita with death if she did not agree to be his wife within two months. When Ravana had departed, and Sita was left alone, Hanuman approached her mos humbly and told her that he was sent by Rama, and gave her Rama's signet ring. She was greatly relieved and pleased that Rama and Lakshmana were well, and blessed Hanuman profusely. Sita gave Hanuman her message for Rama and also her crest jewel as a token. Hanuman wanted to be allowed to carry Sita on his back to Rama, but Sita did not think it proper, as it would do no credit to Rama that she should be rescued by Hanuman. So, Hanuman took leave of Sita, but then he decided to ascertain the powers of the foe. With this object in mind he destroyed the pleasure garden of Ashoka and killed its guards. Ravana sent many warriors to capture Hanuman, but Hanuman slew them all. Finally came Indrajit, the son and a warrior of great renown. After great efforts on the part of Indrajit, Hanuman deliberatly allowed himself to be captured. He was brought before Ravana in his court. There Hanuman saw Ravana in his full royal

splendour and pomp. Hanuman told Ravana to follow daharma and to return Sita, but Ravana beside himself with rage ordered that Hanuman's tail should be set ablaze as punishment.

The Rakshasas soaked Hanuman's take in oil and fat and set it on fire. Hanuman swelled into a formidable size and scaled the lofty mansions and palaces with his burning tail, and thus spread the conflagration. The big fire spread everywhere aided by the swift wind. Having burnt down the city of Lanka, Hanuman quenched the fire on his tail in the sea, and then in a mighty leap returned to his friends on the other side of the sea. All the apes and bears and their chiefs collected around Hanuman, and heard him with great joy relate his daventures in Lanka. In a very happy frame of mind they returned to Rama on Prasravana hill, and bowed their heads at his feet. Hanuman gave Rama, Sita's message and her crest jewel and related all that happened there in Lanka during his sojourn. Rama held Sita's jewel against his heart, and weeping in you embraced Hanuman again and again.

The Great March

The high-souled Raghava praised Hanuman for his wonderful achieverment, but felt sad to think how the monkey army would cross over the sea. Sugriva comforted Rama with inspiring words, and then the mighy hosts of apes were ordered to march. They reached the shore of the sea, and its din drowned the roar of the sea. Rama summoned a council and discussions were held as how to cross the sea. In the meanwhile, Vibhishana, Ravana's younger and saintly brotehr, came to Rama seeking refuge and joined him. Ravana had insulted Vibhishana when he advised Ravana wisely to send Sita back. It was decided that Rama should seek the Ocean's help for constructing a causeway. Rama prayed for three days, but there was no response from the Ocean. Rama got furious and was about to dry up the sea when the Sea-god appeared from the ocean-depths with joined palms and begged Rama's forgiveness. He told Rama that there was Nala, Vishvakarma's son, a skilled ape in his army, who could construct a causeway across the sea, which the Ocean promised to bear up.

Nala was immediatly summoned and ordered to construct the

bridge. The apeas sprang on their feet and ransacked the forest for timber. They pulled and broke off the mountain peaks and within six days Nola completed the wonderful bridge over that hundred yojana stretch of the sea. The monkey army crossed over the sea along the bridge and camped on the southern shore. When Ravana heard of the causeway and the crossing over of the sea, he was wonder- struck. He found Lanka besieged by the monkeys. Beside himself with rage, he ordered his army to march and a terrible battle ensued.

The Great Battle

The apes and the Rakshasas clashed and the battle grew fiercer. They fought many terrible duels and single combats. The sun went down but the fight continued. Indrajit, Ravana's great warrior son, using magic tactics wounded Rama and Lakshmana at many places remaining himself invisible. He finally immobilized both the heroes with a shower of his sharp arrows, and returned in triumph to Lanka. Vibhishana rallied the monkey forces and said encouraging words to Sugriva. In the meantime Rama recovered, but finding Lakshmana seemingly dead, lamented piteously. But then there appeared Garuda, the king of the birds. As Garuda came near, the sharp snake-arrows fell from the wounded Rama and Lakshmana. He touched their bodies, and they were healed of their wounds and regained their former vigour and strength, and even more.

When Ravana heard of the princes's recovery and their release from the Nagapasha, he could not believe his ears. He sent Durmukha, a valiant Rakshasha as the head of a great army. He fought fiercely but then finally Hanuman slew him with a huge rock. Ravana then sent many other great Rakshasa warriors, but Ravana was humbled and humiliated again and again by Rama and his army. Ravana then sent his brother Kumbhakarna to give the fight. He looked like the god of Death itself, and the earth shook under his tread. He was huge like a mountain. He caused havoc in the ape army and killed thousands of them. The rocks broke against his mountainous body and the trees were smashed. He wounded Hanuman and struck Sugriva unconscious and carried him away to

Lanka. But the Sugriva recovered and cutting off his ears and nose with his teeth and nails got away, and the battle began afresh. Kumbhkarna rushed at Rama, but Rama with his sharp arrows deprived him of his weapons and then cut off both his arms. They Rama shot a splendid Indra arrow with the speed of thought. It lit up the whole atmosphere and went hissing and cut off Kumbhakarna's mountainous head. His trunk reeled and toppled down crushing thousands of apes. The routed Rakshasa army fled to Lanka in panic and told Ravana about his brother's death.

Sunk in deep sorrow, he bewailed his mighty brother's death. and fainted. When he recovered from the swoon and sat brooding over the death of his so valiant sons, brothers, chiefs and others at Rama's hands, there came his son Indrajit. He said, "Stop grieving, O father and king, for still I am alive. None can escape my deadly shafts." Indrajit rode again to the war and massacred the apes in the fight. He made himself invisible and wrought havoc among the enemy forces. His arrows were seen but not their author himself. Under his onslaught of arrows even Rama and Lakshmana fell down senseless and dead to all appearances. The monkey chiefs were totally confused and stupified. Then Hanuman sped to the Himalaya mountain and brought from there the life-saving wonder-herbs. The prices inhaled the wonder-herbs and soon were completely healed. They woke up as if from a sleep.

The battle began again the next day, and Indrajit again restored to his maya-tactics. He had a phantom Sita with him, whom he slew in the full view of the monkeys. Hearing of Sita's death Rama fell in a swoon, deluged in grief. Vibhishana came there and saw Rama lying unconscious. Vibhishana then told Lakshmana, Hanuman and Sugriva about Indrajit's magic and the phantom Sita. He assured them that Sita was very much alive and safe for Ravana would never allow her to be slain. Encouraged with these words of hope, Lakshmana went straight where Indrajit was performing a sacrifice and challenged him to a battle. Lakshmana engaged Indrajit in a terrible battle and then finally despatched him to the abode of Death with his deadly missiles. The Rakshasas fled pell-mell and reported to Ravana his son's tragic end.

Ravana Slain

It was too much for Ravana, and he fainted. Coming to his senses, he wailed loud and long inconsolably. His sorrow changed into wrath and then mounting a splendid car he rode to the battle, accompanied by many mighty giants. As he moved, the earth quaked, the sun grew pale and the sky was enveloped in darkness. Ravana of the formidable strenth, wrought havoce, and even monkey chiefs fled in terror before him. Rama stretched his bow taut and rent his dreaded arrows. The gods from above saw Rama on foot and Ravana on his car. They felt the fight was unequal, and so Indra, the lord of the gods, immediately sent his celestial car. A wonderous duel ensued between the two heroes like between the two lions. Both the armies stood motionless and marvelling with their hair standing on end, and witnessed the final encounter spell-bound. It fascinated the gods and they exclaimed, "The sky is like the sky, and like none else. The sea can be compared only to sea. So is the duel peerless between Rama and Ravana, like the heroes themselves". Rama took a razor sharp snake-arrow and with it cut off one of Ravana's ten heads, but instantly another sprang up in its place. Rama severed hundred heads Ravana, and hundred other sprang up on his shoulders. It filled Rama with wonder and the fight went on for seven days and nights ceaselessly. Finally, Rama shot the most dreaded missile presided ovey by Brahma, given to him by the great sage Agastya. The wind in its feathers, the sun and the moon in its might, and its body was that of space (akasha). Its weight was equal to mountains. The lethal arrow went hissing with the speed of thought and piercing Ravana's chest, cleft his heart, and he fell dead on the ground. Ravana's funeral rites were performed by his brother Vibhishna with due honours.

The Fire Ordeal

Vibhishana conducted Sita in a planquin reverently before Rama's presence. He and his attendants drove away the crowd of monkeys, bears and Rakshasas, but Rama stopped it and ordered Sita to be brought on foot in the full view of the crowd. Sita cama and stood before Rama, but Rama spoke to her hershly saying that he had redeemed the honour of his family by defeating the foe, and that he

took all the trouble not for

her sake, but to wipe away the insult done to his fair name. He said, that he could not take her back as she had lived long in another's house. These cruel words of Rama stunned the great assembly, and Sita then said, "O hero, why do you speak like a common man? I did not come into another's contact out of my desire, I was helpless. My heart was mine and it is still pure and chaste. You have utterly failed to understand my exalted birth and nature, I am earth-born Sita."

She immediately got a pyre prepared and entered into it, as she did not want to live in shame and false accusation. The great assembly was horrified. Then the gods., appeared and proclaimed in one voice Sita's innocence and purity. Rama was immensely happy at this and weeping in joy said, "I knew Sita is chaste and pure, but fire ordeal was essential to convince the people of her sinlessness". Agni, the fire-god rose from the blazing fire with resplendent Sita in his lap, and offered her back to Rama. Rama got up and empbraced Sita. Rama then returned to Ayodhya with the blessings of the gods in the Pushpaka Viman. He was accompanied by Vannara chiefs. Bharata met Rama and offered him his worship and wased his feet. Then, Bharata restored the kingdom to Rama most most humbly.

The Coronation of Rama

Rama's matted locks were trimmed by expert hair dressers. Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna also got rid of their tangled and matted locks. Rama was escorted to Ayodhya in a splendid car and a grand procession from Nandigram, and installed on the throne with the chanting of Vedic hymns by guru Vashistha, helped by other sages. Sita sat on the throne beside Rama shining in her effulgence. Rama gave away suitable presents of jewels, gold, silver, money, steeds, elephants, milck-kine, bulls and rich robes to Vanara chiefs, Brahmans, priests, Vibhishana and to others. Rama made Bharata Yurvaraja and his junior, and ruled justly like his great ancestors for a long time performing holy rites and many sacrifices, including the great Horse Sacifice. The prople lived heppily leading a virtuous like of dharma.

Ram Chandra

Lord Ram is the seventh Avatar (incarnation) of Vishnu. Born during the second age of the world called Treta Yug, he is the immortal hero of the great religious epic of Inida, the Ramayan. This epic seems to have been written sometime between the fifth and the first century B.C. though broadlines of Ram's noble life were known to the residents of this land much earlier.

Ram occupies a very considerable place in the religious life of India and in the religious history of the world. He is the embodiment of righteousness and is believed to be the incarnation of the solar aspect of Vishnu. The most ancient and most striking of the tales of Ram Chandra is the Ramayan, written by sage Valmiki, who is also said to be the father of epic style of poety.

Innumerable temples are scattered all over India having the images of Ram, his younger brother Lakshman and his consort, Sita. In all images Ram is invariable depicted to have two arms and not four, which emphasises the character of Ram as a human being and the way god Vishnu preferred to adopt this form just to re-establish the golden age of justice and happiness. The expression of Ram Rajya even today means the reign in which peace and prosperity prevails.

Ram's story follows this way. At the end of the Treta Yug or the second age of the world the sages, the holy men and even gods found themselves in great terror and alarm at the misdeeds of Ravan, the demoniac king of Lanka, and the horde of his followers. Ravan had pleased Brahma by austere penances and Brahma had given him the boon of invulnerability from the wrath of any god or gods. Thus being fortified Ravan started his reign of terror and misused his power to terrorise people in order to subdue them. All the gods then decided to approach Brahma to relieve them of the looming danger and deliver the sages oftheir sufferings, which were the result of the boon bestowed by Brahma and misused by Ravan: Brahma diclosed to them that Ravan, in his pride, had thought that only gods could overpower him therefore he did not care to include man in the category of those who could subdue him and only a being in man's shape could kill him.

The gods now reached Vishnu to whom they prayed for deliverance because he was responshible for preserving of heavenly and earthly order. Vishnu promised to descend on the earth in the shape of a man by being born as a son to Dashrath, a king of the solar race, reigning at Ayodhya.

When King Dashrath was performing a religious sacrifice, the fire-god emerged before before him out of the sacred fire and gave him a pot of nectar for his three wives to drink. King Dashrath gave half of this nectar to his seniormost wife, Kaushalya, who brought forth Ram with one half of the divine essence, a quarter to Kaikeyi, the second wife, whose son Bharat was endowed with a quarter of divine essence; and the fourth part to Sumitra, the juniormost wife, who brought forth two sons, Lakshman and Shatrughan, each having one-eighth part of divinty. All four brothers were deeply attached to each other but Lakshman was more especially devoted to Ram and Shatrughan to Bharat. Lord Vishnu had thus kept his word to gods and was born as Prince Ram in the household of King Dashrath.

Another legend gives the verson that Dashrath divided the divine nectar between his two senior wives, Kaushalya and Kaikeyi only and that when the younger, Sumitra, asked for some, each of the senior ones gave one half from their respective shares. So Sumitra received two quarters and gave birth to two sons—one part received from Kaushalya gave birth to Lakshman who was ever attached to Ram and the other part received from Kaikeyi gave birth to Shatrughan who was more attracted towards Bharat.

All the four brothers grew up together at Ayodhya and learnt fast various subjects covering arts of peace and methods of wars. While they were still young and Ram had turned only sixteen, one highly revered saint, named Vishwamitra, came to king Dashrath. He requested for Ram's help to protect him and his disciples from demons, who had been interfering with his usual religious sacrifices to gods. Very reluctantly Dashrath sent Ram and his younger son Lakshman to the hermitage of sage Vishwamitra. Ram cleared the hermitage of all demons and killed a powerful female-demon named Taraka. Sage Vishwamitra was very pleased and

taught Ram precious pieces of rare wisdom. He also gave Ram some celestial weapons with extraordinary powers.

Vishwamitra took the two brothers to the court of king Janak, the rule of Mithila—a territory near Ayodhya. Janak had a very beautiful daughter by the name of Sita. At that time Sita had grown and her father wanted to marry her to a talented and strong prince. Janak had in his possession a divine bow of great weight, which god Shiv had given to him as a gift. The King arranged for a competition as a prelude to Sita's marriage. He announced before the assembly of competing princes that anyone who could lift and stretch the string of this bow, would win the hand of his daughter. None could succeed except Ram, who stretched this old bow with such force that it broke into two pieces. This way Sita was married to Ram amidst joy and gaiety.

The breaking of Shiva's divine bow by Ram into two pieces led to an interesting episode. Parsuram, the sixth incarnation of Vishnu, was alive at that time. As mentioned in the part dealing with Vishnu, this sage-in-incarnation, to take revenge against Kshatriyas for the murder of his father, had exterminated the members of this caste a number of times. He just at that moment, reached the court of King Janak. Seeing the bow broken into parts he became furious and started rebuking the prince of Ayodhya. He challenged Ram to combat with him and settle the score. However the dispute was ultimately peacefully settled and Parsuram too was convinced of the greatness of Ram.

There at Ayodhya King Dashrath felt that he had been growing old. He decided to formally announce the name of his eldest son Ram as the next successor to his throne. What happened then was that Kaikeyi, the second and the most favourit wife of Dashrath, had a hunch-backed maidservant, named Manthra. She was crooked not only in body but in mind too. Though Kaikeyi, like a good step-mother, loved Ram without malice, this female slave Manthra, playing the rold of a wicked court lady, worded upon the maternal instincts of Kaikeyi. She instigated her mistress against her step-son and pleaded that this action of the king showed no regards for the sentiments of the woman, whom he pretended to love so

much. Why should Bharat, the son of Kaikeyi, not be declared the heir- apparent of the kingdom of Ayodhya?

Her baser instincts being aroused, Kaikeyi decided to defeat Dashrath's plan of declaring Ram as the next king of Ayodhya. She remembered the old days when king Dashrath, infatuated by his wife's charms and feeling grateful on account of her one time courage in saving the kings's life, had given the word to grant her two boons. She remonstrated with her husband and reminded him of his word of honor given earlier. She asked him to declare Bharat as the next king of Ayodhya and also to send away Ram for fourteen years in exile away from Ayodhya. After so many arguments and with utmost reluctance the king yielded to the presssure and agreed to send Ram into exile for fourteen years and to install Bharat on the throne of Ayodhya in his place.

Ram as an obedient son, bade good-bye to his parents and the people of Ayodhya. He together with his wife Sita moved towards the south. His younger brother, Lakshman, the son of Sumitra, also accompanied both of them. All the three settled at Chitrakut in Dandak forest between the river Yamuna and Godavari. King Dashrath could not bear this shock and departed from the world. His other son Bharat was called from the place of his maternal uncle, where he had gone with the other brother Shatrughan. On his return Bharat was asked to ascend the throne, which he refused point-blank stating that the rightful heir to this throne was the eldest brother, Ram Chandra. Bharat together with numerous courtiers and enthusiastic people of Ayodhya set out for the forest. Both the brother met and a long discussion ensued. Ram declined to return to the kingdom without completing the exile term of fourteen years while Bharat did not agree to sit on the throne. It was finally agreed that Bharat should return and act for the time being till Ram returned as the latter's vicegerent. Ram's footwears were carried by Bharat to Ayodhya as a sign of regard and obeisance to the elder brother. The pair of shoes was to be placed always at the foot of the throne in recognition of Ram's supremacy.

For a period of ten years Ram together with his wife and brother moved in the forests from one hermitage to another. Then he met

near Vindhyachal mountains sage Agastya, who advised Ram to set up his abode at Panchavati near the banks of the river Godavari. Ram with Sita and Lakshman accordingly settled at Panchvati.

This place was adjacent to the regions inhabited by Rakshashas (demoniac tribes) and had been attracting periodical visits by them. Once Soorpa Nakha, a sister of the mighty demon king of Lanka, named Ravan, visited the place and was enchanted by the physical beauty of Ram. When she made advances, Ram rebuked her. On her scurrilous remarks against Sita, Lakshman could not control his rage and chopped off the nose of Soorpa Nakha. To avenge this insult she returned accompanied by her two other brothers, Khar and Dushan, who also brought a big army with them. In the battle both the brothers of Soorpa Nakha were defeated and their army routed.

Being thus thwarted Soorpa Nakha repaired to Lanka, where her mightiest brother was the ruler. She wept before Ravan and pleaded for revenge against this supreme humiliation suffered by her. Ravan took his best confidant Marich with him and made plans to teach Ram the lesson for life. Marich lured Ram away from the hermitage on a hunting expedition by himself posing as the prey. Lakshman was left alone on guard with Sita. Maricha on false pretext succeeded in sending Lakshman too on a mission to search for Ram. When thus left alone Ravan disguised himself as a Sadhu (Medhicant) and Forcibly kidnapped Sita from her hut in Panchvati.

The anger and sorrow of Ram at the disappearance of Sita knew no bounds. He was determined to trace his wife and to punish the culprits. He and Lakshman started the search in right earnest. On the way they won the friendship of the chieftain of monkey tribe. His name was Sugreev, whose throne in the capital, named Kishkandha, was usurped by his own brother Balee. Ram killed Balee and restored the throne to Sugreev. This paved the way for a solid alliance that helped Ram in a great way in his battle against Ravan and his forces. As a result of this friendship Ram not only got massive support of the huge army of Sugreev but also found a highly loyal and efficient general named Hanuman, who proved to

be the greatest asset to Ram.

To prove his gratitude to Ram, Sugreev sent a great number of his monkeys in search of Sita. These monkeys went southwards and on the way found out that the domon Ravan had stolen Sita and kept her as his capitve in Lanka. Immediately Hanuman became ready to go to her as Ram's emissary Ram gave his ring to Hanuman to convince Sita of the latter's genuine status. As Hanuman was the offspring of the god of winds, he concentrated his powers and leaped across so many miles over the sea. He saw Sita being held as a prisoner in a garden of roses, called *Ashoka-vatika.* He showed the queen the ring of Ram and assured her that he would be soon coming to rescue Sita from the clutches of Ravan.

Meanwhile Ravan's guards managed to catch Hanuman and brought him in the court of Ravan. As legend goes before being caught Hanuman succeeded in killing so many guards including one of the sons of Ravan, named Akshaya. Then Ravan's mightiest son, Indrajit was sent and he could bring the monkey general before Ravan. The king ordered his servants to dip the monkey's tail in oil and set it on fire. The enraged Hanuman with his tail in flames leapepd from one house to the other thus setting so many of them aflame. Eventually he left Lanka and reached Ram's camp to give him the news about Sita's plight.

Now Ram and Lakshman together with the big army of monkeys proceeded to invade Lanka. Reaching the sea-shore Ram first worshipped Lord Shiv and prayed for the success of his mission. He then requested the ocean to devise some way so that he with his vast-army could cross over the sea and invade Lanka. The ocean appeared before Ram and replied, "Lord Ram, every element has certain nature of its own and it cannot be altered. I cannot dry the water-bed to help you. The only way to cross me is by building a bridge. Among the army personned of yours there is one ape named Nal. He is the son of the god of construction, Vishwakarma and Nal has a blessing that whatever he would throw in the water would not sink but float." At the command of Nal, rocks were brought and he threw them into the sea. A long bridge was thus built connecting Lanka with the shore on Ram's side. The sea was crossed and Ram together with his army reached the outskirts of

Lanka.

Fierce fighting ensued. Many of the mighty generals of Ravan and a great number of his soldiers were killed in the battles. Then came forward Kumbhkaran, the younger brother of Ravan. A giant in body and a lion in valour, he fought bravely against Ram and his allies. He started devouring the monkeys. However, the agile monkeys, when the giant put them in his mouth, came out of his ears and nostrils. Ram with the help of his bow are arrows first cut off his arms, then his legs. Still he waddled round and continued the fight. Eventually Ram gave him a fatal wound in the neck.

Then came Indrajit, the son of Ravan. In this battle Ram's brother, Lakshman, was severely wounded and became unconscious. The physician prescribed a herb that could save the life of Lakshman. But it grew far away in one of the mountain ranges of the Himalayas and someone had to fetch it before the day-break. The agile Hanuman came forward and moved towards that mountain with the speed of wind. When he brought the herb, the life of Lakshman was saved in time In the dramatic fight later, Indrajit was also defeated and killed.

New Ravan himself entered the field of bttle. After fierce fighting that lasted many days, Ravan was slain and victory ensued. Sita was thus rescued from the clutches of Ravan. Demanding a proof of her innocence during captivity, Ram desired Sita to pass through a fiery ordeal. Ram did this to convince all sceptics about his wife's purity rather than to assure himself. After her innocence was proved, Ram, Sita and Lakshman returned to Ayodhya. This story of Ram has also got an interesting epilogue.

Ram mounted the throne and started ruling over Ayodhya. However, some persons in the capital commenced a slander campaign alleging that it was not proper for Ram to shelter Sita after she had been kept by a demon king in his captivity. Ram, therefore, sent Sita in exile. She found refuge in the hermitage of sage Valmiki, where she gave birth to two sons, Lav and Kush. Before long Ram performed the horse-sacrifice ceremony, enjoined upon brave kings by holy scriptures. In this ceremony the two sons of Ram, Lav and Kush, challenged their father's supremacy and

their identity was eventually disclosed. Ram wanted to repeat the old fireordeal in front of the people of his kingdom to prove the fidelity of his wife. However Prithvi (the earth), the mother of Sita, opened her bosom and took back her daughter to the great remorse and lamentation of Ram. After completing his mission ram too left his material body and went back to his heavenly abode.

The festivals associated with Ram's incarnation and celebrated in India are Ram Navmi, Diwali and Dussehra. The first one is associated with the birth of Lord, Ram, the seventh incarnation of Vishnu. This birthday of Ram falling on the ninth day of the Hindu month called Chaitra, is celebrated in almost all Vaishnav temples. Congregations are organised, sermons delivered and songs sung by devotees.

Dussehra is the culmination of the ten-day celebrations, organised to exhibit the episodes from the life of Lord Ram. For the first nine days the whole story of Ram is enacted on stage with great pomp and show. One the tenth day the last episode of Ram's victory over Ravan is shown and the effigies of Ravan, his brother Kumbhkaran and his son Indrajit are burnt amidst loud rejoicings. In all the big cities of U.P., Bihar, M.P., Delhi and Mysore this festival is a day of mass celebrations. Lacs of people gather in vast fields and open spaces to witness the burnings of the effigies and the fire works following the same.

Diwali is celebrated, according to one legend, on the day Ram was crowned after his return to Ayodhya with Sita.

As Ram had ascended the throne on this day, King Vikram, who probably started the custom of lighting lamps as a part of Diwali festival, selected the same auspicious day for his coronation too. Diwali is the most important festival of trading community is Western India, where money is spent lavishly on this day Sweets are distributed amongst friends and relatives; public buildings in cities are beautifully illuminated and children are supplied with a good stock of crackers which they use till late hours in the night. Houses are cleansed and neatly white-washed while in business houses new account books are started.

According to one of the Upanishads, named Ram-purvtapni

Upanished, "Just as the whole nature of the large banyan tree is contained in its tiny seed, so also the whole universe moving and unmoving, is contained in the word-seed Ram".

Ram's name was also the last word uttered by Mahtma Gandhi at the time of his assassination.

Rationality of Worship of Many Gods

Even Adi Sankaracharya, the great apostle of Advaita philosophy did not look down upon the practice of worshipping many gods. To begin with people are at different stages of understanding the truth. To common people who understand only mythology, it is very difficult to realise the fact that *there is only one God.* Let us take electric energy for example. I can explain to you easily with the aid of electron theory, whereas my mother understands it with a statement that "electricity flows like water." The same subject, but both my mother and you understand it in two different ways even though both of you have the same results by using electric energy.

Again Lord Krishna has promised that even if you worship a thousand forms of God, through all those forms you are actually worshipping HIM]not Krishna, the Avatar, but Krishna—the Almighty. When you pray to Jesus Christ, you are not praying to the Christ—the man, but to Christ—the spirit —the Almighty.

Finally, by Hindu code of ethics, yogis are warned against tampering with people's beliefs. As per Hinduism, if a person has steadfast faith in his ideals, he will ultimately find the truth. So, however insignificant his method of worship may be the Truth will come to him.

As I said before, it is quite all right to worship many gods but one thing devotees have to worry about is the feeling that one form of God is superior to another or the feeling that one's personal God (*Ishta Devata*) is greater than the neighbour's god. In devotion to God, one is supposed to dissovle the I-ness, or *Erase the Ego.* Instead if one develops Ego by fighting for his God (*Ista Devata*) then the whole basis of Bhakti Yoga is totally lost. *Ego is ego in whatever form it comes out and it is better on the part of a devotee to recognize it from its start and eradicate it.*

Remember the fighting between Vaishnavites and Saivites only helped in the downfall of Hinduism and finally Adi Sankaracharya had to come and raise Hinduism to its present glory. So you can have a personal god but try to see your personal god in all the forms of God. *You should be able to worship in a Christian church, a Jewish synagogue, a Muslim mosque or a Buddhist vihera and see your personal God in all those places of worship. By doing so you will be able to establish the oneness of God as well as eradicate your Ego which is a stumbling blick in your spiritual progress.*

Ratnapani (*with a jewel in the hand*)

God. Buddhist. A form of Ratnasambhava and also a *dhvanibodhisativa* or meditation *buddha.* Colour: yellow or green. Attributes: a jewel and the moon disc.

Ratnaparamita

Philosophical deity. Buddhist. Spiritual offspring of Ratnasambhava. Colourared Attributes: jewelled staff and moon on a lotus.

Ratnasambhava (*born of a jewel*)

Origin Buddhist (India). The third dhyanibuddha or meditation buddha.

Known period of worship circa 500 BC until present.

Synonyms Ratnaheruka.

Centre(s) of cult pan—Asiatic.

Art references metal and stone sculptures; paintings.

Literary sources Sadhanamala and Tantric ritual texts.

One of five mystic spiritual counterparts of a human Buddha in Vajrayana Buddhism. A product of the Adibuddha who represents the branch of the cosmos concerned with sensation. He originates from the yellow mantra symbol TRAM and lives in the southern paradise. The head of a group of dieties who carry jewels and are family symbols. His Sakti is Mamaki and he is normally

accompanied by two lions or horses. Colour: yellow. Attributes jewel and three monkish robes. Ratnasambhava is also taken as a tutelary deity in Lamaism [Tibet] in which case his attributes include a bell and a jewel. Emanations include Aparajita. Jambhala. Mahapratisara, and paramitas, Prasannatara, Ratnapari, Vajratara, Vajrayogini and Vasudhara. (See also Aksobhya, Amitabha, Amoghasiddhi and Vairocana.) Colour: yellow: Attributes: bell and jewel.

Ratnolka (*jewel metear*)

Goddess of light and deification of literature. Buddhist one of a group of dharanis. Colour yellow. Attribute: jewelled staff.

Ratnosnisa

God. Buddhist. An usnisa deity apparently linked with the guardian sky deities or dikpalas in the southern direction. Colour: blue.

Ratri

Goddess of the night. Hindu (Vedic). Ratri is the personification of darkness bedecked with stars. Her sister is Usas. The dawn goddess, who, with Agni the fire god, chases her away. She is perceived as the guardian of eternal law and order in the cosmos and of the waves of time. She is generally a benign deity who offers rest and renewed vigour, and who may be invoked to ensure safety through the hours of darkness. She deposits the gift of morning dew. She also offers a bleaker aspect as one who brings gloom and barreness.

Raudri

Mother goddess. Hindu (Epic and Puranic) One of a group of nine navasaktis who, is southern India, rank higher than the saptamataras. She may also equate with the terrifying aspect of Parvati as Durga of Kali.

Revanta (*with wealth*)

God of hunters. Hindu. The son of Surya and Sanjna. Known mainly from eastern India and Gujarat, he protects mankind against the dangers of the forest. Infrequently depicted in art.

Revati

Minor goddess of fortune. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). A benevolent *naksatra*; daughter of Daksa and wife of Candra (Soma).

Riddhi (*prosperity*)

Goddess. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). One of the consorts of Ganesha, but otherwise very close in appearance to Laksmi. She carries Laksmi's attributes when standing alone.

Riddhivasita (*control of prosperity*)

Minor goddess. Buddhist. One of a group of vasitas personifying the disciplines of spiritual regeneration. Colour: green. Attribute: moon disc.

Rig Veda

The Rig Veda is the foremost of all Sruti (that which is heard or revealed) literature. It consists of 1,028 hymns with a total of 10,562 lines which are described in 10 books. A hymn has three basic parts. The first part is an exhortation, the second part is the praise of the deity in the form of a prayer and the third is a special request. The religion explained in the Rig Veda can be called Brahminism or Vedism. In the Rig Veda we see the Aryans just settling down in the valleys of the Indus river and worshipping all the powers of nature such as Air (Vayu), water (Varuna), Sun (Surya), Moon (Soma), Fire (Agni). The Rig Veda does not seem to be scripture composed during a particular pariod of time but a cripture composed in stages over several centuries.

One of the most important idea that came out of Rig Veda is the cosmic order named Rta. Rta means Cosmic and Sacred Order, an ultimate and harmonic structure of reality. Later this cosmic order Rta became to be known as Dharma or Sanathana Dharma or Righteousness Forever. Dharma became not only the universal law but also the moral laws of Hinduism.

Even though in Rig Veda, we see an evolving society praying to all aspects of nature, we also see the birth of very advanced thinking within the society. Just read the so called *Creation Hymn* (Rig Veda X, 129, 6-7).

After all, who knows, and who can say

From where it all came, and how creation takes place?

The Gods (powers of nature) themselves came after the creation.

So who knows truly when it has happened?

When all creation originated?

He (Almighty), whether he fashioned it or whether he did not,

He (Almighty), who surveys it all from heaven.

He (Almighty) known ...or may be even he does not know

he does not know

There is no particular author for Rig Veda. It is the collective work of many great sages. One of the most important sacrifices in the Rig Veda is the Soma Sacrifice. *Soma* is a narcotic beverage prepared from a plant which many think is none other than mushroom. The Rig Veda does not shed any light on birth rituals but *Vivaha* (marriage) and cremation of the dead are dealt with. Of all the gods described in the Rig Veda, Rudra is the most important. The popular caste system is also referred to in this scripture. There are also references to the transmigration of souls from body to body.

The Upanishads are the last of *Sruti* (that which is heard or revealed) literature. Most of the Upanishads are in the form of dialogues among saints and between gods and saints. The Brihad-*Aranyaka Upanishad* and *Chandogya Upanishad* are the longest Upanishads. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan said: "So numerous are their suggestions of truth, so various are their guesses at God, that almost anybody may seek in them what he wants and find what he seeks, and every school of dogmatics may congratulate itself on finding its own doctrine in the sayings of the Upanishads."

So the Upanishads teachings are very vast and complex and their impact on Hinduism is very difficult to assess. The Upanishads actually opened up the free thinking spirit in religion. They challenged the rationality of gods and sacrificial rites. One of the most important sages in the Upanishads is sage Yajnavalkya. Most

passages in the early Upanishads are in prose and they are also in Question and Answer form. Some of the best books about Upanishads are written by Hume. Dr. S. Radhakrishanan. R.D. Ranade, Swami Chinamyananda etc.

Some of the questioners in the Upanishads are women named Maitreyi (wife of sage Yajnavalkya) and Gargi (daughter of sage Vachaknu). An ordinary man who reads Upanishads haphazardly will find them confusing and contradictory. But if one goes through the entire Upanishads in a very orderly fashion then one will understand the actual meanings conveyed by the Upanishads teachings. Now let us briefly go through the teachings of some of the main Upanishads.

Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad (very popularly known among the Western Theologians as the *Great Forest Book*) is one of the earliest and longest Upanishads. One of the greatest teachers of this Upanishad is sage Yajnavalkya. Yajnavalkya said: You cannot see, the seer of all things; you cannot hear, the hearer of all things; you cannot think, the thinker of all things; you cannot understand, the knower of all things. That which is beyond all comprehension is the self within you (III.4.2)

This Upanishad states about Self again in a different manner as follows.

"When one breathes, one knows him as breath;

When one speaks, one knows him as speech;

When one sees, one knows him as the eye;

When one hears, one knows him as the ear;

When one thinks, one knows him as the mind."

This is the Upanishad, which really dissects all the aspects of the God. It discusses about multiple gods and finally states that there is only one God and That is breath. This Upanishad also explains God as the Brahman—the Absolute Soul. It states the Atman—the individual soul-is only a reflection of the Brahman. In a dialogue between King Janaka (father of princess Sita) and sage

Yajnavalkya, the *Light of the Brahman* is explained in a very interesting manner. According to this, everything in the world has Name, Form, and Activity. The Absolute which is the unmanifest is the manifestation of these three aspects.

One of the most popular prayers of Hinduism, comes from this Upanishad and it is as follows:

Lead me from unreal to real

Lead me from darkness to light

Lead me from death to immortality

(*Om Shanti, Om Shanti, Om Shanti*).

When a devotee sings the prayer this line is added to the body of the prayer.

Chandogya Upanishad is another long Upanishad. According to this everythings is Brahman. It clearly states that originally there was the Being and the world manifested out of the Being and not out of the Non-Being. This Upanishad argues against the notion of the world coming out of non-being.

The sage Sandilya said:

At the time of death, a knower of Brahman should meditate on

Thou art imperishable;

Thou art the change-less reality;

Thou art the source of life.

In verses 3:14, this Upanishad states: Verily, the whole world is Brahman. Let one worship it as that from which one came forth, as that into which one will be dissolved, and as that which one breathes.

Katha Upanishad starts with a story. Once upon a time a Brahmin named Vajasrabasa was sacrificing everything hoping to get some divine favour. In the midst of his sacrifices, one of his sons *Nachiketas* implored his father to sacrifice him to the God of death—Yama. Finally the father sacrificed his beloved son to

Yama. When the boy reached the abode of the god of death, Yama was perplexed by the act of *Nachiketas* and asked him to go back to his father. The lively theological consersation that took place between Nachiketas and god of death Yama, is what comprises the Katha Upanishad. Yama is explaining the ultimate secrets of the universe and the nature of the Brahman in this beautiful Upanishad.

Kena Upanishad says that which cannot be expressed in words by which the tongue speaks—Know That to be the Brahman. That which is comprehended by the mind by which the mind comprehends—Know That to be the Brahman. According to this Upanishad Brahman is the ultimate factor of the universe. The sense organs work because of the Brahman. He who says he knows the Brahman does not know the Brahman. For knowing that is to lose the identity of the knower with the Brahman. A devotee who seeks Brahman merges with the Brahman, like a pinch of salt which tries to find the bottom of the sea becomes one with the sea. Maybe that is the reason why the Chinese mystic Lao-Tse said:

He who knows never tell

He who Tells never knew

Aitareya Upanishad provides an interesting story of creation. The story goes as follows. First there was Atman. It was alone. Then it created waters. Then it wanted to create gods. So then it created a man. For that man a mouth was given. Out of the mouth, speech and the God of fire came out. Then it gave man nostrils and out of nostrils came breath and god of air. Then it gave man eyes and out of eyes came sight and sun-god. Then it gave the man different limbs and out of them many other gods came out. Finally Atman entered the man at the parting of the head and became the "I".

Prasna Upanishad is an interesting dialogue between sage Pippilada and devotees by name Sukesha, Gargya, Kousalya, Bhargava and Kabandhi. The discussion starts with Kabandhi's question: Sir, how did the creatures come into being?

Mundaka Upanishad differentiates knowledge into higher and lower knowledge. The Higher knowledge is Vedas. Mandukya Upanishad is the teachings of the sage Mandukya on four stages of

consciousness which are waking, dreaming, deep sleep (Sushupti) and finally Turiya state. Turiya state alone is real. Atman can be realized only in the Turiya state. Mandukya Upanishad is the smallest of all the 13 principal Upanishads.

Taittiriya Upanishad consists of five different ways of explaining the world. According to this Upanishad, the Pancha Boothas or Pancha Tattwas or the Five Elements by which the entire matter is made of, themselves orginated from one another. For example Ether (Akasha) is born out of Atman; Air (Vayu) born out of Ether; Fire (Agni) born out of Air; Water (Jala) born out of Fire; Earth (Prithvi) born out of water.

Shvetashvatara Upanishad is the teachings of the saint Shvetashvatana. Unlike others he taught. Theism, not the Absolute Brahman. He taught by meditation one can see the God. Max Muller desribed it as "the most difficult, and at the same time one of the most interesting works of its kind." Adi Sankaracharya himself regarded this Upanishad as direct contrast to his own monastic ideas. This Upanishad starts with a lot of theological questions such as, What is the cause of our birth? What sustains our lives? etc. The Upanishad is very much associated with Saivism and sometimes referred to as the Holy Bible of Saivaites.

Introduction

The ancient Indian wisdom, known under the generic name of the Vedas, has withstood all these centuries the acid test of time so well that now their immunity from corrosion of any kind, is beyond any shadow of doubt. They form a great human heritage and universalize the universal. They are the oldest human monuments of religion, philosophy, ethics, science and literature, all rolled into one. As most ancient documents of wisdom, they are universal in their appeal and significance, and belong to the entire humanity, and are for all times. What constitutes Vedic lore, stads lone and apart in its splendour like the Pole Star, shedding the divine light for the onward progress of entire humanity, because man is not destined to die as man. He has to evolve further and further spiritually, morally and materially.

The Vedas are four—Rig, Yajur, Saman and Atharva, but traditionally they are sopken of as "Trayi", the Triple Vidya or the threefold knowledge, because they deal with Jnan, Bbakti and Karma, and are in prose, verse and songs. The Rigveda underlines the path of jnan or knowledge, the Yajurveda that of karma or action, and Samveda that of bhakti or Atharvaveda represents a synthesis of the three. The Vedas are invariably referred to as the "Triple Etemal Vedas", (trayam brahma sanatana) probably also because the fourth one, that is, the Atharvaveda is relatively of quite a late origin. The Yajur and the Samveda repeat the Rigveda to a great extent, but the Atharvaveda is a collection of original hymns and borrows little from the Rigveda. These four together form the foundations of Indian religions, philosophical and cultural systems and observances. Indian culture and civilization has survived the ruthless ravages of time all these millenniums only because it is based on the firm rock-forundation of the wisdom of the Vedas. To possess a proper understanding and insight into Indian culture, thought and wisdom, it is essential that one has a good grounding in the Vedas, the supreme authority and knowledge of the people now called the Hindus. All other Shastras are derived and based upon the fundamental knowledge of the Vedas. Being the outpourings or breath of the Supreme Being, they constitute the highest authority of religion and righteous conduct.

Each of the our Vedas consists of the Samhita, and the *Brabmana*, the Samhitas contain original texts of the Veas, comprising collection of suktas, humns, prayers, incantations, religious formulas and litanies. The Brahmanas the commentary and interpretations of the Samhitas or the original texts. The Brahmanas are again divided into Brahmanas proper, the *Aranyakas*, and the *Upnisbads*. The Aranyakas, or the Forest Texts, are called so because they were both composed and studied in the forest-dwellings. They contain the contemplation and meditation of the forest hermits and ascetics on God and soul. The Upnisbads, or the Vedanta, attached to the Aranyakas, contain the secret doctrines, and much of the ancient Indian thought wisdom. The term "Upnishad" literally means, "setting at rest ignorance by revealing the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit". They form the

sacred doctrine whose sole aim is the exposition of the secret meanings of the Vedas. They are the fountainhead of the Vedanta and Samkhya philosophies. Then, there are the "Vedangas" or the "limbs of the Vedas", the auxiliary sciences known as "kalp-sutras" or popularly as "Sutras". They are aphoristic manuals on rituals, phonetics, grammar, etymology, astronomy, etc. All these above books constitute the Vedic Literature.

The apparent and the so-called polytheism in the Samhitas, etc, is, as a matter of fact, an aspect of the Vedic monism and monotheism. The Vedas have categorically declared many times that Reality is one, sages call it by various names, "God is one, but its dimensions are several. The various Vedic gods are simply the different manifestations of the same Reality. For example, it manifests itself as Savitr in the celestial region, as Indra in the mid-region and as Fire on the earth. As Fire he is the mouth of gods and lord of the home (*gribapati*). As Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt, the same Reality protescts the devotees from the demons and evils, and blesses them with life-giving copious rains. As Savitr or Aditaya on the highest plane. He is the great giver of life, wealth energy, light, warmth and wisdom.

This so called multiplicity of gods amply reflects the essential Vedic doctrine, "All paths lead to the same goal". The Truth is one, and every one is seeking it. The individual temprament, time, place, name, etc., create the so-called differences. There is nothing than Brahman, and the world is but the manifestation of a part of Him:

What was, what is, and what shall be
All is Om.
Whatever else is beyond the bounds of threefold time.
That also is Om.

Brahman desired to become many, to procereate himself and he did so, He is the cause of Universe and everything is in him. Indian wisdom did not believe either in regimentation of the approach to the Reality, or in limiting the Truth. That would have meant negating the Reality. That is why there is so much variety and diversity, and each one is allowed to follow his own path to

Reality. There are many a flight of stairs leading to the same unified vision of non-duality. The various gods, like other mortals, were bom at some time or other. Most of them are the sons of Aditi. They were born during the course of evolution of the universe. Some of the mortals rose to the height of divinity by their austerities and taps. This facilitates a direct communion between men and dogd. Even an ordinary man can invoke the deities through mantras or protection, blessings and beatitude. This also marks the universality of the Vedas.

The Vedas are called "*Srutis*" revelations orally communicated by God, and heard but not composed or written down by the Rishis. the Vedas are "*apaurushabya*" which means that their authorship cannot be assigned to any human agency, that they are breathed out by God and visioned by the ancient seers. They are divine revelations emanating from Brahman. Thus, the Vedas are impersonal knowledge and wisdom received by the "drishtas", the seers. The seers are not their composers individually or collectively, but were blessed with the divine inner audience from Him. It means that the knowledge of the Vedas was received by the Rishis in a state of supra-normal consciousness. Their non-authorship imparts to the Vedas a universality peculiar to them.

Their being "apaurushaya" and impersonal also signifies that in a sense anybody who imbibes their spirit, prays with them and contemplates through them can be their author. You are their author if you read and recite them, if you assimilate their essence. You can also envision them as did our ancient seers and Rishis. This makes these books of great wisdom ever living perennial and relevant. The seers were the men of realization. They were possessed and inspired, and were extraordinarily gifted poets. They were Brahamins, usually married, leading an austre, holy and socially very meaningful life. They possessed enormous spiritual powers and so were held in great awe. Maitreya, Narada, Markandeya, Gristamada, Vishvamitra, Vashistha, were such great seers. They are said to have sprang to life from Brahma's thought and so were known as "mind-born". They must have been historical characters but later on they became legendary and a thick

forest of myths and legends grew around them. they were distinctly human and sometimes even displayed anger, etc. like other human mortals. Thier names later passed on to the Vead knowing families who continued their oral tradition of Veda recitation. These Rishis and Seers are now the heroes of countless myths and legends. They were mainly Brahmins, but there were also Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra Seers as well, but it was an exception to the rule. We also come across such female Rishis as Lopamudra, Apals, Surya, Juhu, Yami and Ghosha, but again relatively they are few and far between and not so renowned as their male counterparts.

But there is a considerable difference of opinion among the scholars and thinkers as what portion constitutes the Veda proper. One school believes that whole of the Vedic literature comprising Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upnishads has emanated from Brahman. They regard all these portions or books as revealed and visioned. On the other hand there are others, who have firm conviction that the Samhitas or the texts of the Vedas are alone the Veda proper, and the rest are the appendices. They are of the opinion that the Brahmanas, etc. do not form a part of Sruti because they are not the words of God, but a commentary on them. According to them the Samhitas are the foremost and supreme authority and the rest are secondary, and authority only in so far as they are in consonance with the original texts of the Vedas. Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upnishads are the workds of the Rishis and ascetics. They interpret and comment upon the teachings of the Vedas, and so are quite separate. They are named after their composers and authors, and so cannot be called the Veda in strict sense. These scholars regard the four Samhitas as the only Sruti, or revealed words of Brahman, and the rest of the Vedic literature as a mere commentary. Maharishi Dayananda Saraswati was foremost of such thinkers as regarded that Samhita texts alone constiuted the original Vedas.

Although the Brahmans and Upnishads are later than the Samhitas, yet the ideas represented by both the sets of texts are the same. They all are harmonious and homogeneous. There has been a constant and continous growth, but there is no departure. The Brahmanas interpret and comment upon the sacrificial texts of the

Vedas, while the Vedanga or Upnishads interpret their philosophy. The whole of Vedic literature marks the progression and expansion, but not departure or diversion.

The Rigveda, the collection of Mantras called "Riks," is boviously, the oldest. It is first and foremost of the Vedas. The other Vedas are more or less extensions and enlargements of some portions of the Rigveda. Both the Samveda and Yajurveda have most of their material from the Rigveda, with certain additions and alterations here and there. Rigveda is entirely in verses, and a major portion of it is for use in sacrifices. The Vedic Age and wisdom held the entire cosmic process as an observance of a great sacrifice, and therefore, laid so much emphasis on the performance of the Yajna in keeping with the cosmic process. Over half of it hymns Indra and Agni. The other important gods hymned here are Varuna, Savitar, Surya, Ashvins, Ushas, Pushan, Soma, Maruts, and Vishnu. Then there are hymns such as the hymn, of Creation, Purusha Sukta, the funeral hymn, the hymn to departed souls and to Vishvadevas. Then there are some beautiful dramatic dialogues between Yama-Yami and Pururava-Urvashi. There are also some individual verses, quite secular and even peculiar and satirical. These include the "frog song", a verse in praise of generosity, riddle songs, etc.

In all there are 10,589 hymns, divided into 10 Mandalas or Books and a Valkhilya. Khila means a "Supplement", and obviously represents texts which were added to later on. The 10 Mandalas or Books are further subdivided into Anuvakas (Lessons), and Suktas, for example, Book One has 24 Anuvakas, 191 Suktas or Hymns and 1,976 Mantras. Thus, Rigveda is a great book of knowledge and revelation comprising 10 Books, 85 Anuvakas, 1,080 Suktas and 10,589 Mantras or hymns. Here, in this Anthology, meant for general readers and common men, the hymns, relatively less intelligible and obscure, repetitions, not so relevant in the modern context and those which do not contribute substantially towards the enrichment of experience, have been excluded and omitted. There are still many verses in the Vedas which remain inexplained convincingly. There has been a great freedom, even arbitrariness in regard to the interpretation and explanation of the Vedic text. The

present selection has strived to omit all such arbitrary and rank subjective interpretations of the text. It is hoped that this Anthology of Rigvedic hymns marked with religious fervour, freshness, delicacy and primitive simplicity, the outpourings of the devout hert would help a lot in the desired transormation and enlightenment of the readers.

I glorify God Agni, the chief Priest, minister of the sacrifice, the bounteous giver of wealth. Praiseworthy is the effulgent lord by living and ancient sages. He brings the Gods hither. He brings us wealth and food increasing daily, fame and heroic sons to gladden our hearts. Only the sacrifice that you Lord encompass and guard reacheth the Gods in heaven. To you, dispeller of darkness, O Agni, we come with daily prayer, bringing our reverence. O Lord of sacrifice, nourisher of the world, thou waxeth mighty in thine own dwelling. Be easy to us of access, like a sire to his son, be with us for out weal and joy.

O Friends, come and sit ye down all here together to hymn Indra. Sing his praise who is the Lord of all things, the best and the richest, the showerer of wealth. May he help us in acquiring abundant wealth and grant nourishing food four our health and strength. Paraise Indra, whose strength foemen in battle dare not challenge. Come ye near him, the Soma-enjoyer for whose enjoyment the juices have been shed mingled with curds. O Indra, born to enjoy the juices, thou hath grown strong to perform noble deeds. Let the speedy Soma enter thee, O Indra, and lover of song, to make you happy. May these our songs of praise increase the powers, and may our Vedic hymns magnify thee, O God, full of never failing power. May thou Indra of infinite strength accept our food offerings of thousands of kinds containing manly strength, the source of true delight. O Lord, let not men harm our body, thou keep violence far away from us.

O men, learn ye that Indra made light where there was no light and form where there was no form. He was born with the Dawns. Thou, Indra, pierced the cave and discovered the kine like the fierce Wind gods who break down things that are firm.

The singers, the reciters and the choirs have glorified Indra. Indra

the golden, thunder-armed, with his two bay steeds hath the world as his car. He hath placed the Sun on high that people may see by his light. Clouds he bursts to shower the rain. O aweful Indra, help us by your fierce acids in battles to win thousands polis. We invoke Indra in frays small and great, our unfailing Friend who hurls his thunderbolt at wicked powers. Unclose for us, our irresistible Hero, thou bounterous India, the yonder cloud. Higher and still higher I sing his praise, but I find no praise worthy of him. He, the irresistible, drives the people with his might, as the bull drives the herd onward. He is the soverign of wealth and fivelold race of men that dwells upon the earth. Indra, we call thee away from all other men, may he be ours and none others.

Our hymns extol Indra, vast as the ocean, the best hero borne on chariots, the Lord of strength and protector of men. We bow before Indra, and glorify him, in whose mighty friendship we never fear. Thou art, O hero, ever conqueror but never conquered. The gifts of him from of yore, his saving succour, never fail, when to his devotees, who laud him, he gives land, kine and wealth. Indra the weilder of thunderbolt, the young, the wise, of limitless strength, the sustainer of all sacred acts, much extolled, is the crusher of enemies and their forts by birth.

Every day in the morning, we invoke Indra, during the sacrifice for drinking Soma juice. Come here with thy bay steeds, the juice is effused. Come thou to our sacrifice where thy songs of praise are sung, to juices shed for thee, drink of it like a thirsty stag and increase thy strength.

I invoke Indra and Agni, the great Soma-drinkers for the fame of Mitra, the friend and benefactor of all. We call upon strong and mighty Indra and Agni to enjoy the oblations offered here in the Yajna. O mighty Gods, protectors of men, come to us, destroy the wicked ones. Let the wicked foes, the devourers of men be destitute of progeny. May Indra and Agni, who are well known for their truthfulness, fill us with joy and happiness.

May Heaven and Earth grant sweet nourishment to our sacrifice. May the Earth be without thorns and pits to provide us dwellings. May she, spreading wide, the resting place for all, grant us delight

and pleasure by providing shelter. May the learned protect us by teaching about the allpervading God, who created this world with seven substances, and sustains all comprising earth, water, fire, air, etc. God alone should be adored who made this visible earth, the invisible subtle world and the brilliant solar world. He, the ominpresent and protector of all upholds the threefold world, which follows the eternal law ordained by Him. Look ye, O men at the works of God, the true friend of the soul, the giver of bliss, the creator, sustainer and disintegrator of the world. The righteous and learned men behold God within their hearts, as the ordinary mortals see the Sun in the sky. These learned men, singing His songs of praise, attain the blissful light, of all- pervading God that is the goal of all.

These Lords of Law, of light, I call who uphold law by law, Mitra and Varuna, I invoke. May Varuna be our chief guardian, may Mitra defend us with all his aids. May both the Gods help us grow rich. May Waters contiguous to the Sun or its light and those with which the Sun is associated be propitious to our sacrifices. I invoke the Waters for the performance of the sacrifice, wherein our cattle quench their; offer ye the oblations to Rivers. Know ye learned men, there is Amrita in the Waters, there is healing balm. Know this and be enlightened. Soma hath told me, there dwells within Waters all balms that heal. Agni, also benefits and blesses all. O Waters keep my body safe from harm with your medicinal qualities, that I live long to see the Sun. Whatever sin is found in me, whatever evil I have done, if I have falsely sworn or lied, Waters, remove this sin from me.

Who is he, what God, the give of bliss, whose auspicious name we may invoke and remember? Who will send us back to Aditi, the great Boundless that I may see my father and my mother? He is Agni, the God omniscient, his auspicious name let us invoke. It is he who restores us to. Aditi, that we may again see our parents. Varuna of pure vigour, abiding in the baseless sky, sustains the rays whose base is high above. There are streams below. May they be concentrated within us as a source of healthy existence. He hath made a spacious pathway, for the Sun wherewith to travel, even in the region where there was no path to set its footstep, and drove far

away the unrighteous. O Varuna, thou last a hundred, nay a thousand healing balms, deep be your favours, keep away the unrighteous, put away the sin committed by us and liberate us from it. The stars that appear on high in the sky at night, by day they disappear, whither we know not. Varuna's laws are immutable and inviolable by whose command the Moon sails forth at night in splendour. Loosen the bonds, O Varuna, which hold and crush us. Make us sinless in your holy law, unbound us, thou of Aditi.

Whatever law of thine, O God Varuna, we being mortals, may violate day after day. Consign us not, we beg, as prey to death, or to thy wrath to be destroyed when displeased. Just as a charioteer tethers his horse, so shall our hymns bind thy heart to obtain thy mercy. As to their nests the birds fly, so do my desires fly away in search of happiness. He the lord of sea, knows all the ships that are thereon. True to his holy laws, he knows the twelve months with their progeny the days. He knows the pathway of winds sweeping high with might, he knows the Gods who abide in heavens. Varuna, hear this call of mine, grant us your favour, longing for help I have cried to thee. Thou sovereign and wise lord ruling over the Earth and Heaven, hear me, as you pass on your way. Release me from all bonds that I may live.

O God, ever true, though we faint in utter despair, to thou Indra grant us hope of thousands of cows, horses and land, O lord of treasures. O Lord of strength, subdue the malevolent, spirits that haunt, let them sleep. Grant us hope of thousands of fine cows and horses.

O radiant and immortal Dawn, who is he that does not approach you to obtain delight and true happiness? O wonderful, red-hued and brilliant Dawn, thou have had been in our thoughts whether nigh of far away. O daughter of the Sky, thou Dawn come unto us with thy nourishments and grant us riches.

O Agni, I call first for our prosperity, I call on Mitra, Varuna, they may and us nere. I invoke Night who, provides the world with rest, and on Savitar I call that he may lend us aid. Wheeling through the dusky sky, on his golden-chariot cometh Savitar, laying to rest both men and Gods and gazing on all created beings. Adorable Savitar

comes from far distance, journeying along the upward then downward path with his resplendent steeds. he comes chasing away every danger and distress. The mightly car adorned and decked with pearls, with golden pole, he hath mounted. The radiant One, God Savitar, the mightly, comes sweeping darkness away. Drawing the car with golden pole, his bay steeds, whited footed, have shed the light over the whole world. All men all beings abide for ever in divine Savitar's bosom. Savitar, the farseeing, golden-handed God, marches on between the Heaven and Earth, driving away sickness, bidding the Sun to approach us, and soars up in the sky from the dark some region. O Gods, thy ancient paths are well established and dustless in the atmosphere. Now, come unto us along these paths so fair and protect us from harm, and bless.

We choose Agni our envoy, the omnicient God, our Hotar-priest. The fames of the mighty Agni spread wide around and reach the sky. The Gods awaken thee, their messenger of old. The sarcificers gain wealth by proffered oblations unto thee. Thou effulgent God, lord of the house, men's envoy, all noble and inviolable deeds and the laws observed by the enlightened men, are agregated and harmonised in thee.

When will ye, O Maruts uphold our sacrifice as a father holds by both his hands a son, Gods for whom sacred grass is spread? O Gods now whither? Where do ye go to attain your goal like the beams of the Sun reaching the Earth? Where are your roars that sound like a low of a cow to her calf? Where are your latest favours and happiness? Where is, O Gods, your prosperity? O Maruts, as a deer is never indifferent to pasture, so let not your admirer suffer censure, nor let him go to Yama's path soon. Let never diseases destoy us, let them depart from us. May health and happiness be attained by us. May ye mighty Maruts, sons of Rudra, send pleasant rains over even the desert. The lightning which roars like a mother cow lowing for her calf, and the Maruts set free the rains. They spread darkess over enen the day with the water bearing clouds and then inundate the Earth. When the Maruts roar, the seat of earth shakes and men begin to tremble. Come ye Maruts along the beautifuty embanked riverfronts, with strong hoofed steeds unobstructed. May the fellies of your wheels be firm, steady your

chariots and steeds and may your rains be fashioned well.

Never is he harmed whom Varuna, Mirta and Aryaman protect. He ever prospers and is free from obstacles whom the Gods Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman safeguard as with both arms and preserve from foemen. These Gods drive away the enemy and lead the righteous safely over distress. Where Adityas are the preservers, and where the path has been made thonless, there is no fear. That man, unsubdued, leads a righteous life long and full of happiness.

Shorten our path, O God, remove all obstacles, be close unto us to show the path. Scare away from our path the wicked wolf, the inauspicious wolf that lies in wait to harm. Chase the robber away from our way who lurks there with a guileful heart. Tread under thy feet the burning brand of the wicked, the double tongued, whoever he be. O wonder-working God, we claim from you that sain aid which you did give to our fathers of old. So, granter of favours, wielder of golden sword make for us riches easy to be won. Aid us, elude the pursuers, make our way easy and smooth, lead us to pastures rich, protect us from heat, show thou thy power for this. Be gracious, fulfil us all, give us food and nourishment, show thy power for this. All that ye do for us, O God, shall win our laud. We magnify thee with songs of praise. We seek the Mighty one for boons.!

Now Dawn with her earlierst radiance shines forth, beloved daughter of the Sky. Lofty Ashivins, I praise you much. O ye sons of the Ocean, full of abundant knowledge, you give us much wealth. Your mightly horses speed forth through the glorious heavens with the chariot flying like birds. O Ashvins, truthful, and circumambient, Dawn follow ye, grant us prosperity and royal wealth. O Ashvini, drink this nectareous Soma juice offered in libation and with your irresistible protective aids bestow upon us bliss and fine residence.

O brilliant Dawn, the daughter of the Sky, diffuser of light, dawn on us with radiance, prosperity and riches, O admirable Beauty! O Dawn, utter the sweet and joyous words to make me happy. Take away the wealth of those rich who go astray and give it to the noble men and thereby make me happy. The Goddess Dawn travels on

pleasant cars, on whom thy have fixed their thoughts, who desirous of wealth send their ships to the sea. The learned men sing aloud the glories of the Gods. The princes, at thy approach, O Dawan, fix their thoughts on higher things. Dawn comes carefully tending everything, stirring all creatures, all the creeping and winged things. She sends the busy forth, each man to his pursuit, being active, delay she knows not. O Radiant one, after thy rising, the birds that have flown forth no longer rest. The Ushas have harnessed the cars afar, before the rising of the Sun. Borne on hundred chariots of rays she marches on her way to men, the auspicious Dawn. Dawn the daughter of the sky, an excellent leader of the day, to meet whose glance all beings bend down, who drives away the malevolent and the wicked. Shine on us, O Dawn, thou the daughter of the Sky, bringing happiness in abundance and scattering darkness away. O thou, Lady of Light, each creature's breath and life, cometh borne on thy lofty car, now listen, thou of wonderous wealth, to our call. O Dawn, as thou hast set open today the doors of the heaven, so thou grant us spacious and secure dwellings, free from the fear of wild beasts. Fulfil our noble desires and give us food an milch-kine. Make us happy with abundant weath of many kinds and gladdening plentiful food.

Dawn comes by auspicious ways from high sky's bright realm. Let thy red steeds bring thee down to the house where Soma is poured in oblation. O daughter of the Sky, come mounting the chariot, beautiful, pleasant and ample, to aid and protect a noble man from all evils. Brilliant Dawn, when your rays appear, all living beings start to stir, both biped and quadrupeds, and the birds fly in the sky to and fro.,

His bright rays now bear him aloft, the God who knows all living things, the Sun, that all may see him. Now, steal away the stars with Night, at the all-beholding Sun's approach. The beams that herald him are seen from afar, shining over homes of men like gongues of fire, that burn and blaze. Swift and beautiful art thou, O Sun, father of the light, who illumines all the radiant realm. Thou shinest upon the hosts of Gods, and likewise on manking, that the heavently light may be beheld. With this same eye, O brilliant Varuna you keep watch upon the busy race of men. Moving across

the sky, and the realm of space, thou measure the days by means of your light, seeing all things that have birth. Seven bay steeds drawing your car carry you, O farseeing God, Surya with flaming hair.

Though even this heaven's wide space and earth have spread out, nor haeaven nor earth may be Indra's match in greatness. He, mighty and awful life a bull among the herd of cows, whets his thunderbolt. He is like the ocean who receive rivers spread out on all sides. He is like the mighty bull to drink the Soma juice and he being a powerful hero is ever praised for strength.

O Agni, the source of energy, all other fires are thy different branches. All immortals delight in thee. Thou art the centre of all living beings and support of all the creatures, giving them power sustennce. Thou art the centre of the earth and the fore- head of heaven and illuminator of all. The sages manifest thee, May we ever adore thee, O God Agni. Thou art sovereing of all the universe, the lord of all objects that mountains hold, of herbs, of the waters and of men. All these objects abide in these O Vaishvanar like the rays of light set in the Sun.

The Hotar-priest, the lord of all the treasures, Agni is the foremost in sacrifice The sacrificers who desire their offspring to continue their line are disappointed not in their desire. They all quickly obey the commands of this Agni like sons obedient to their fathers. He possessing abundant food and wealth, unbars the same like a door, he is to be honoured and served by all.

We, the pious men, meditate upon God Agni, the omniscient who knows all our acts old or new, all divine laws which regulate the race of mortal men. Let us worship him, who is present as a germ in the waters, in the woods, the rays of the sun and moon, within all movable and immovable things, even in the mountain and mansions. The immortal God is the controller of the objects and cares for all men. Agni, lord of riches, gives wealth to him who serves him with songs. O God, protect all these many creatures on earth, thou being omniscient, knowest the origin of both the Gods and mortal men.

We sing a hymn of praise to Agni as to Yajna we go forth. He listens to our words everywhere far and near. We chant our hymn for him, who preserves his wealth for those who give themselves up to God Agni. Let men speak of him to one another who is the dispeller of darkness, and causes victory to his devotees in every strife.

Accept thou our resounding praise, and the food delightful to the Gods, poured in thy mouth as oblations to be consumed. O Agni, the wisest and the noblest, the best mediator, may we utter to thee an acceptable and much precious prayer. Who among men is your kind? Who are you? On whom dependent? You are of all men the brother and their dear companion, a friend whom friends may supplicate. Bring to us thou Agni, Mitra and Varuna, bring the Gods to honour to thy own hearth.

What is that that may please you? What song of praise shall bring us your divide blessings? With what oblation should we attain you? Come to us Agni, and take your seat. Be our leader. May Earth and Heaven that gratify all, protect you, worship the Gods to win their favour for us. Burn all the wicked, O Agni, to protect our Yajna from violence. Bring hither with his steeds the lord of Soma, the giver of prosperity. O thou, our officiating Hotar priest, I invoke you, come to us and be seated among the Gods. I praise you with my lips as noble controller, generator of riches, giver of progeny. O Purifier.

When at thy roar, O Indra, all objects both movable and immovable shook and even Tvashstar became agitated at thy wrath and trembled with fear, did thou, then honour thy sovereign authority and imperial sway. There is none to emulate Indra in his might. In him the Gods have treasured many boons like industry, perseverance and power, which laud his own imperial authority.

O Indra, refresh thee with the Soma juice effused for thy joy and strength. We know thee well to be the lord of ample wealth, therefore, be our protector. We approach thee for the attainment and increase of our strength. These thy subjects, keep for thee all that is worthy of ye. Thou, lord of all, knowest what are the possessions of those men who offer no gifts. Tho bring us this

wealth of theirs.

O Indra, yoke your two by steeds. O Maghavan, listen to our request and do not be negligent to us. When we solict felicity from you, make us full of joy and happiness. Quickly yoke thy bay steeds, O Indra, for us. The wise men, resplendent like the Sun, have lauded thee with their hymns the friends have risen and gone after having enjoyed the meals, We bow before you, Indra, thou art so beautiful to look upon. So adored by us and bound with full and true bond of love, subdue our adversaries, yoke your steeds and drive thy car for gaining victory over the wicked. Now, yoke thy Car, O Indra, containing all material of war, arms, weapons and other requisite things, the chariot which brings wealth and kine. O Lord of hundred powers, let thy steeds be harnessed on the right and left of your car. Therewith in the ecstasy of Soma juice, riding the chariot draw thou nigh your consort and gladden her. O lord of mighty arms, I yokd in your chariot the steeds of long and shining manes like the beams of the Sun. Now hold in your hands the reins. The Soma juices have gladdened you, thou thunderer has rejoiced with thy beloved.

Show respects to Indra, sing his glory you men. Let the juice of Soma make him glad, pay adoration to his superior strength. When you, O Indra harness your chariot, there is no better warrior than you, none equal to you in strength, none although well-horsed has overaken you. He is Indra indeed, who alone bestows wealth on charitably disposed men. His heroism is undisputed, and he is lord of immense strength. When will you trample upon the godless men who have no gifts to offer, as if upon a coiled snake? When will you, verily, listen to our praise? With bones of Dadhichya for his weapon, Indra of indomitable power, has struck ninety-nine Vritras dead.

The Maruts. the loud singers, endowed with great vigout, unbendings, immovable, unflinching, impetuous, absolutely fearless, the most beloved, the most manly, have manifested themselves, like the heavens studded with stars, when on the steep they pile the clouds, they look like birds flying along a certain path. The clouds pour sweet rain upon your cars. Rain riches him who

sings your laud. When the Maruts march on the path of victory sportfully, roaring loudly and armed with flashing weapons, they magnify their glory. Then, at their march the earth shakes under the wheels of their chariots like a girl suffering from cold fever. Swift moving are you spotted steeds, O youthful Maruts, revered, true and endowed with vigour, sincere, liberator from debt, lords of the army, irreproachable are you and therefore, be our protector.

Come here, ye Maruts on your lightning cars, stored with various weapons and nourishing wholesome food. Fly unto us like birds and then go wherever you list. Their tawny or perhaps red hued horses which speed their cars, they have come for victory. Bright, brave and wonderful is he, who is armed with strong weapons, and who annihilates his enemies with sharp edge of the wheel which is like a thunderbolt. O Maruts, shining with swords upon your bodies, men amass for you wealth like a mountain. You should also bring about their weal. As you stir tall trees in the forest, so may you stir our spirits.

May auspicious, benevolent grace of Gods be ours, may the Gods shower on us their unhindred favours from all sides. May they be our protectors every day for our progress, never failing in their care, being ever alert. May the righteous Gods gladden our hearts with the warmth of their love. We invoke them with Vedic hymns of ancient times Bhaga, the prosperous, Mitra Aditi, Daksha, Aryaman, Varuna and Soma. May Goddess Saraswati, grent us prosperity and good progenty. May the Wing waft to us beneficial, disease destroying medicine. May mother Earth grant it, and our father Heaven. May the twain Ashvins, and the stones that press out the Soma juice, hear this our call. May the grace of the Gods encompass us, their friendship we seek. May the Gods grant us life that we may live! May the illustrious Indra give us prosperity and happiness, may Pushan grant us bliss, the sustainer of the world. May Tarkshya with his firm and unharmed fellies prosper us, may Brihaspati, grant us prosperity! May the Maruts, bome by graceful spotted horses, come to us in our rites, moving in their majesty. may Agni whose tongues are flames, radiant like the Sun, come here for our protection. May we ever hear, O Gods, what is good, may we ever see what is good. May we attain such stage of life as

is appointed by Gods, through our bodies firm, helpful to the cause of righteousness. A hundred autumns are there for us. O Gods, kindly do not interpose in the midst of these years of our fleeting existence, by inflicting infirmities in our bodies, so that we may gain the age when our sons become fathers in their turn. Aditi is eternal, Aditi is the Sun, the sky, mother, knowledge, father, guardian and son. Whatever has been and shall be in the course of time is is all Aditi; Aditi is immoral Gods and the five classes of men.

May Varuna lead us on the path of Dharma, and Mitra, a friend of all, and Aryaman straight on the path of righteousness in accord with the Law. They, the virtuous Gods, protect all evermore the noble persons. May they bestow upon us mortals, shelter and happiness destroying our enemies. May they, Indra, Maruts, Pushan and Bhaga lead us to bliss and prosperity. Ye Gods, our nourisher, enrich our songs with kine and grant us prosperity and happiness. May the winds blow sweetness, the rivers flow sweetness, the herbs be sweet for us, the men of law. Sweet be the nights, and sweet be the dawns, sweet be the atmosphere, sweet be the Father Heaven. May the tall trees afford sweetness, the Sun shine sweetness. May our kine be sweet for us and milk in plenty! May Mitra, the friend to all, be gracious to us, may Varuna bestow peace on us. May Aryaman, Indra, Brihaspati and Vishnu the allmighty, be pleased to grant us peace.

O Soma, endowed with all the glories displayed in heaven, on earth, on the mountains, in the plants and in the waters, do thou, being kind, and devoid of anger, accept our oblations. O Soma, thou art sovereign lord, protector of the noble, Vritra slayer. Thou art most auspicious and omniscient. May we live long and not die prematurely, O God Soma, praise loving lord of herbs and plants. O God, Soma, be glad to dwell in our hearts as cows in milk, in grassy meads, or as a bridegroom in his own house. O God, when in your friendship a mortal man finds delight, then you mighty sage grants him favour. Save us, O Soma, from distress and reproach, be unto us a loving friend. Let your virility come to us from all destroyer of disease.

The Dawns have spread light over the eastern firmaments, they have raised their radiant banner, like warriors brandishing their weapons, onward they march, red-hued, the mother cows. The purple rays of the Dawns have shot up unhindered, yoking to their cars the red clouds. The red-hued Dawns in their splendour have restored, as of old, to sentient beings their clear perception. They sing a song like women engaged in some task, along the same path, coming from afar. They bring refreshment to the liberal devotee and grant all good gifts to those who effuse the juice. She, like a dancer puts her ornaments on, as a cow yields her udder, so she bares her bosom. Creating light for all animate beings she hath laid the gates of darkness open, as cows their stall. We have beheld the radiance of her face, it spreads driving away the monstrous night. Like a tinted post, decorated at the sacrifice, the Heaven's Daughter hath attained the wonderful splendour.

Now we are on the other side of the darkness. Dawn, shining forth again gives clear vision. She smiles like a flatterer, immersed in glory, her fair face hath awakened us to joy. The chanting sacrificers have praised the Heaven's radiant Daughter, the lady of charms. Dawn, thou grant us strength with offspring and men, make us rich in steeds and kine. Dawn, thou shines forth in wisdom and splendour, urged by your own strength. O auspicious one, grant us ample wealth, renown, brave sons, servants and possesson of horses. Having lighted up the whole world with her gaze, she spreads her radiance towards west. She awakents all living beings to the labour and pays heed to the call of every worshipper. This ancient of days, born anew again and again, decking herself with the same ornaments, she wastes away the life of mortal men like a skilled bird catcher who holds in his clutches the feathery creatures. Discovering the heaven's borders, she has chased away her sister Night to the far distance. She reflects the splendour of her lover, the Sun and dwindles the days of human mortals. She, the blessed, the radiant, shines forth spreading her rays like grazing kine, as floods rolling, never transgressingthe divine laws, she is beheld by all, being escorted by the rays.

O Dawn, of ample wealth, bestow on us the wonderous gifts that may nourish therewith our children and children's sons. O

auspiciou lady, uttering sweet sounds, shine on us now with wealth of cattle and steeds. O Dawn enriched with sacred sacrifice, harness to thy car purple steeds and bring to us all felicities. O Ashvins, with one mind and intenion drive your car to our home, enriching us with cattle and gold. You who brought down the sweet song from heaven, a light that lights up the world of men, give us strength now, O Ashvins! May they who wake at dawn, bring here Soma juce for Gods to drink, the bestowers of health doers of wonderous deeds, borne on paths of gold.

O Agni to you, worthy of our laud, we send this eulogy as it were a car. Auspicious is thy love for us. Let us not suffer harms in your assembly and friendship. The man whom thou favours, prospers, achieves success, strength and lives without a foe. Poverty touch him not, he grows strong. Let us not suffer in thy friendship. O Agni may we have power to kindle thee. Grant our desires, through you the Gods acquire good food. Bring hither the Adityas for whom we long. May we never suffer harm in thy friendship. We bring fuel and offering for the sacrifice, acquiring virtues with perfect means. Grant us our desires and longevity. May we never suffer harm in thy friendship. O God, desired by all, thou knowest how to grant prosperity, prolong our life here. May Varuna grant our prayers, and Aditi, Sindhu, Mitra, Earth and Heaven.

Shine, thou Agni wealth on us and chase away our sins. May Agni burn down our sins! We make our sacrifice to you for fair fields, goodly homes and for wealth. May Agni burn up our sins! He and others who surpass in devotion are the best. May Agni burn up our sins! O Agni let high priests spring from you. May we be reborn in you. May Agni burn up our sins! The mighty Agni's flames penetrate universally, his visage shines bright in every direction. May the God burn up our sins! Your face is turned to every side. Thou art immanent in every thing. May the God burn up our sins! The God whose glory shines in every thing. May the God burn up our sins! The God whose glory shines in every direction may take us across safely as in a boat. May the lord burn up our sins! O God, take us across safely. across the stream, as in a boat. May the Lord burn up our sins!

May we subsist in Vaishvanara's favour. He is sovereign Lord of living beings, the leader of all the creatures, verily the rival of the Sun. He is present in the sky, present upon the earth, he pervades all the herbs. May that all pervading God, with his vigour guard us night and day against all violent men. May we acquire your vow of truth, maywealth collect round in profusion. May Mitra, Varuna, Aditi, Sindhu, Earth and Heaven grant this prayer of ours!

Let us effuse the Soma juice for Jatvedas, may be consume the wealth of a wicked man. May he carry us beyond all difficulties and troubles, as if in a boat crossing a river!

May Indra, the cause of rains, resplendent King of the earth and heaven, the home of strength, associated with the Maruts, worthy of accepatance, be invoked for our protection! May Indra whose glory is like the Sun, the slayer of Vritra, present in every fray, the mighties, girt by the Maruts,s be ever for our protection. The limits of Indra's powers cannot be reached, neither by the Gods, however divine, nor by men, nor yet by the Waters. In might he surpasses both Heaven and Earth. May he, in association with Maruts be our protctor.

Mighty Indra's power shines in the heaven in one form, the other shines on the earth, and is possessed by the sages of yore. The one in the heaven and the other on the earth, both manifest his glory like a bright banner in a battle. Indra who spread the earth wide and sustains it, struck the lightning with his bolt and unloosed the floods, he also struck dead the demons. To Indra, the mighty and true hero, who is the author of many noble deeds, to him verily we pur out our Soma juice. It is he who takes away wealth from the godless men who do not perform the Yajna. O Indra, thou did a glorious deed when you awoke the slumbering foe with thy bolt. Then the divine Dames were delighted, the Maruts and all the other Gods were overjoyed, much pleased and exulted were they, when you destroyed the enemy forts as the Sun destroys the mighty clouds. May this prayer of ours Varuna grant, and Mitra, Aditi, Sindhu, Earth and Heaven!

We have made an altar for Indra to rest upon. Hasten thou hither to sit upon it as a panting horse. Loosen your steeds, set free your

flying coursers, who bear you day and night to distant places. Grant us, Indra, a share of sunlight, of waters, freedom from sin, and good reputation. Do not in any way harmour heart- desired joys for we have great trust in thy mighty powers! We place our trust in you and your truthfulness. Do not deprive us of good food and noble offspring. O Indra, invoked by many do not consign us to destitute houses. Lead thou to ample riches and provide us with food and drink when hungry. Harm us not, O Indra, forsake us not, deprive us not of the enjoyments dear to us, nor injure our unborn offspring, nor take away our vessels of gold and steel. Come to us, O lover of Soma, we have it ready for you. Drink of it for joy. Let the juice be within you and when called upon, listen us as a father does his sons.

Those who desire wealth gain it, wife enjoys the closeness of her husband, and they entwined in each others embrace, both share the bliss Mark this my hymn, O Earth and Heaven! I ask, the Sacrifce should as a messenger tell me the truth. Where is the ancient law divine? Who bears it amongst the modern men? Mark this my hymn, O Earth and Heaven! O Gods, abiding in the three lucid regions of the heaven, tell me, what is truth and untruth? Where is my call on you of yore? Mark this hymn, O Earth and Heaven! What is the true cause of all these objects? What's varun's watchful eye? How can we go beyond the wicked on the path to Aryaman? Mark this my hymn, O Earth and Heaven! I the thoughtful sang many a laud of old when Soma was effused, yet carrion cares consume me like a wolf who attackss a thirsty deer. Mark this my hymn, O Earth and Heaven!

The Radiant, the Fair has come, to her the dark Night has consigned her home. Both aking and allied to the Sun, immortal, succeeding and effacing each other mutually, traverse and heavens. These sisters have a common and unending pathway, they travel it alternately guided by the Sun, combined in purpose, though of diverse forms, Dawn and Night obstruct not each other, nor do they stand still. Dawn following the path of the endless morns that have gone by, and first of the endless mornings to come being the dispenser of darkness, urges and awakens every living being, but she awakes not one from his slumber who is dead. The men who

looked upon the rising Dawn of yore have departed. We the living now see her and feel happy. Those who shall behold her hereafter will also feel happy. From times immemorial the radiant Usha has been rising with her splendour of light, full of wealth. So will she shine hereafter in future times. Eternal, she moves on with her own strength. On the sky's border she has appeared in full splendour, the Goddess has thrown off the veil of darkness. Her well yoked chariot of purple steeds, heralding her approach, has awakened the world.

Bringing all the life-sustaining blessings with her, brilliantly she shines sending forth her radiance. She is the last of countless mornings that have disappeared, she is the first of bright ones yet to arrive. Arise, the breath of life is again here, darkness has fled and light approaches. For the Sun she has left a pathway to travel. We have arrived where men's existence continues. With the web of songs for Dawns, the priest, the bard rises. They drive onward steering their way, the radiant ones. Shine then today, O bounteous Dawn on him who sing thy praise, shine on us the gifts of life and children! Mother of Gods, Aditi's radiant form, token of sacrifice, shine forth exalted. Rise up, looking on our devotion with favour and be gracious to make us chief among the people. Whatever marvellous wealth the Dawns bestow as blessings to bless a devotee, who offers oblations, that may Mitra and Varuna vouchsafe us, and Aditi, Sindhu, Earth and Heaven!

The Sun follows the radiant Usha, the Goddess, as a youth follows an elegant maiden. In whose auspicious presence learned men calculate the ages for happy days to come. Auspicious are his bay steeds, splendid, swift, changing colours and praiseworthy are they. Bearing our prayers they circumambulate the Earth and Heaven with speed. When the mighty sun withdraws his majesty which spreads all over the world, people stop their labour leaving the work even unfinished. Then, Night spreads her veil of darkness over all the world.

The same today, the same tomorrow, the joyous Dawns do not transgress the eternal law. The irreproachable, they traverse the long and distant space in a moment and can be seen across the thiry

regions. Though born out of gloom but she is shining, white and refulgent and marks the advent of the day. This Maiden transgresses not the eternal law, and comes day be day to the appointed place. The noble Down manifests herself like an ever active maiden, and goes to her loving husband, the Sun. She being youthful and maiden meets the Sun smiling and uncovering her bosom and shining lustrously. Radiant as a bride, well embellished by her mother, she displays her beautiful form that all may behold. Blessed are you, O Dawan shine yet more splendidly. May thy joy never decay. Opulent in kine, steeds and wealth, she is ever possessed of the rays of the Sun, the Dawn goes away and returns again in her usual form sending down her happy gift.

This Dawn, first of many and radiant to look on, debars from her light neither kinsman nor stranger. Proud of her pure form, she shining brighty, spurns not the great nor the humble. She seeks man like a maiden without a brother and ascends her car as if to gather riches. She shining forth and well-ornamented, bares her beauty like a loving woman to her husbands. The sister Night relinquishes her place to her elder sister. The Dawn having seen Night departed, decks herself with shining rays of the Sun, like a girl going to keep a date in a festival. Of these sisters of whom one has just now vanished, a later one succeeds the former in the course of days. So, may these Dawns shine wealth on us as of yore and bring us a happy day.

Ask of him, the God Agni, he comes, he know it, he, the wise is implored. In him are commands, in him are counsels and requests. He is the Lord of power and strength. All men ask him not as seekers of truth, and yet fewer learn. The Sage has all things in his grasp, he goes with his mind composed, for he knows the first word and the last. To him ascend these oblations, these prayers reach him like speedy mares. He listens to my prayers, all-conquering, all-speeding, perfector of scrifice, the Child, ever helpful, he has assumed great powers. Whatever he meets, he grasps and marches on, and thus newly born advances tarther straight way. He bestows. joy and pleasure to the weary, accepting their gifts as he comes. He, the true Lord, is a thing of flood and forest. He has been laid on the highest at the alther. He, the wise, knows the Law and directs

the mortal men to right action.

I laud Agni, the wise seven rayed who pervades all the regions, the higher, the middle and the lower ones. Seated in the lap of his parents and pervading all the luminous realms of heaven and all objects he is perfect. He is a great sustainer grand and undecaying. He keeps his feet firm over the world, his red tongues lick the clouds in the heaven. Like the milch kine, the Earth and Heaven move together towards their common child and fully nourish it. They measure out and uphold the path free form all that is to be avoided, the path that is to be traversed. The leamed men escort him to his dwelling, protecting him the ever youthful. They turn him with reverence and are shown the Sun. He is accessible and inspirer of all, the great and the small aike.

I will declare the mighty deeds of Vishnu, of him who measured out the earthly strides. For this mighty deed is Vishnu acclaimed. He roams the nountains, like a wild beast, wandering as he will, he in whose three nighty paces are the three worlds. Let my song of praise ascend to Vishnu, he Bull of mighty strides who dwells the mountains, to him who with riple stride has measured out these far spread regions. Him whose three paces are filled with such a sweetness, imperishable, the cause of joy. He alone verily sustains the three—the Earth, the Heaven, and all the living beings. May I attain to his glorious abode, where men devoted to Gods live in bliss. where close to the Strider, in Vishnu's footstep, springs the well, pure and sweet.

O for your abode, where dwell the oxen ever fresh and possessed of many horns, for there shines down upon the world, from the highest, the Hero of wide strides!

How noteworthy and wonderful hath been your advent, O Steed, when you emerged from the ocean or space and neighed seeing the light. You possessed the limbs of a deer and pinions of an eagle. Your birth must be lauded indeed. This Steed, Yama's gift, Trita harnessed and Indra was the first to mount. The Gandharva first of all held its reins. From the substance of the Sun, O Gods, you fashioned forth this Steed. You are Yama, O Steed, you are Aditya, you are Trita by a secret operation. You are distinguished from

Soma only a little. You are said to have three connections in heaven. Three bonds you are said to possess, three bond in heaveng, three in water and three in the ocean. You resemble Lord Varuna, O Steed, there they say is your highest birth place. Here, O courser, are the place where you have been groomed, here are the prints of your winning hooves. Here I have seen your auspicious reins that guide you, which, those who guard the cosmic law, protect. I percevie from far your soul, a bird that soars high in the heaven. I have seen your form soring higher and higher along the paths free from dust and pleasent to travel. Behind you, O Steed, come a car, the hero and an offering of kine, and then the maidens. Desiring your friendship they follow with vigour have the Gods blessed you. His horns are of gold, his feet are of iron. He is as swift as thought, but less seift than Indra. The Gods have assembled to taste the sacred oblation, offered to him who mounted the Steed first to all. Like swans flying in row the celestial steeds put forth their might when they reach the heavently pathway, the horses symmetrical in form, of thin bellies and of fiery spirit. Your body, O Steed, is made to fly as on wings, your spirt moves fast as the wind, your horns are spread wide in apace, they speed with restless motion in wildemess. The mighty Steed has come to the place of sacrifice, with his mind composed and thoughts directed towards God. The goat of his kin is led before him, the sages and singers follow next. The Steed has attained the highest abode, he has reached the place of his Father and his Mother. May he receive an utmost welcome today from the Gods and win good gifts for him who offers.

The Earth standing up below the upper region, and above the lowest one, bears her calf like a cow. Wither and to what place does she go? How calves she? Not amid this herd of cattle. The two birds with *beauteous* wings, knit together in bonds of friendship, reside on the self same eternal tree. One of the twain enjoys the sweet and ripe fruit of the tree, whereas the other eating not simply observes.

I ask you about the farthest limit of the earth? Where is the navel of the world? What is the Stallion's prolific seed? Tell me about the highest heaven where abides the peech? This altar is the earth's

farthest limit, this sacrifice of ours the world's nave, the Soma is the Stallion's prolific seed, and Brahma is the highest heaven where the seed, and Brahma is the highest heaven where the speech abides.

The speech is measured out in four quarters, the sages with inight know it. The three kept in close secret cause no movement, the fourth is the division that is talked about by men.

God is one but sages call Him by various names. They call Him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, the mighty universal spirit Garutmat. They call Him Agni, Yama and Matarishvan.

It is not today, nor is it tomorrow. Who knows the mystery? It (the soul) has motion and action in the consciousness of another, but when approached by the thought, it vanishes. Why do thou seek Indra to strike us? The Maruts are your brothers. Achiever perfection with their help, slay us not in our struggle. Who O Agastya, my brother andfried, dost thou neglect us? Well we know the nature of they mind and that thou will give us naught. Let them set the altar, let them kindle Agni in front. We two are here to extend to you our sacrifice that the Gods would observe. O Lord of wealth. Master of power and love, thou art the strongest. Do thou, O Indra agree with the Maruts and enjoy the oblations in their proper seasons.

To you I come with my obesisance and by this hymn I seek the Strong One's grace. Take delight, O Maruts, in my hyman lay your aner aside and unyoke your steeds. This laud full of my obeisnce, framed by my heart and mind, is offered to ye, O Maruts. Come unto us, ye rejoicing to make our prayer fruiful. Let the Maruts, lauded be gracious to us. Let Indra, be propitious, praised by us. Let our days, O Maruts, that are to follow be full of delight. Trembling with the fear of Indra fled. O Maruts, the oblations meant for you were put aside. Forgive and be gracious to us.

By whom the mind grows consicent and sharp, in the momings throught the powers of the dawns, give us thou, O Bull amidst the herd, the glorious energy with Maruts, thou fierce with the fierce, steadfast and giver of strenth. Do thou protect the Heroes with their

increased strength, O Indra, put aside thy wrath against the Maruts. With the wise Maruts be victorious. May be find nourishing food in abundance.

Which of these two came earlier, which later? How were they born? Who, O Seers, knowth it? These of themselves support and contain all that bears a name, and days and nights revolve as on a wheel. These two, though motionless and footless, nourish and uphold variety of offspring having foot and movement. Like parents holding a child on their bosom, O Earth and Heaven protect us from evil! I call for boundless Adidit's favour, bounteous, divine, perfect, inviolable, worthy of reverence. O ye Twain Worlds, procure it for him who worships you. O Heaven and Earth, protect us from evil! may we be close to both these workds who know no suffering, parents of the Gods, who grant favours. Both are divine, with day and night alternate. O Heaven and Earth protect us from evil! These Twin Sisters, lying together in their parents bosom, kiss the centre of the world. O heaven and Earth protect us from evil.

This reverent pair, vast, far flung, variegated, I address at this our sacrfice. May this blessed pair come to our aid. O Heaven and Earth protect us from evil! Whatever sin as we might have committed any time against the Gods, a friend, or a chief, of this may our this hymn be expiation. O Heaven and Earth protect us from evil! May Heaven and Earth, bless and preserve me with their aids and favour. May they grant riches to the men more liberal than the godless. May we, ye Gods be strong with plenty of nourishing food! With great understanding I have uttered the truth, for all to hear on Earth and Heaven. Protect us from every evil, be near unto us and preserve us. Ye Father and Mother! Fulfil, ye Earth and Heaven, this my prayer, wherewith, Father and Mother I address you! Be nearest of all Gods with your protection. May have wholesome food in abundance.

Now my song will glorify Food, giver of strength through whom the Keeper of neactar smote the Demon dead. O Savoury Food, Food so sweet, thee we have chosen as our own, be our kind protector! Come to us, O delightful Food and bring pleasant

refreshment Be thou our friend, health giving and guileless! Your flavours, O food, throughout the atmosphere are spread, like winds they are scattered. O Food, you are the sweetest and best, and all these gifts are thine. You juices create energy and delight in all the creatures. In you, O Food, abides all that the great Gods desire. Brave deeds were done under your flag, he slew the Demon under it. If you have gone into the splendour of high mountains, even from there, O sweet Food, return to us for our enjoyment.

By righteous path lead us to riches, Agni, lead us, O Lord, you know every duty. Deliver us from the sun that leads astray. We will hymn ye with ample praise. Lead us a fresh, O Lord, to bliss, lead us across the dangers and pitfalls. Be thou unto us, a high, broad and powerful tower, bless and grant peace and well being to our children. Sweep away from us, Agni, all diseases, let them strike those who do not have Agni to their aid. May our dwelligs be full of blessings, with all the Gods present, O Holy.

Consign us not as prey to the wicked and the enemy, O Lord. Give us not over to the fanged that bites, nor to the toothless. Give us up not, thus conqueror to the spoiler. A God like you, born after law, O Agni, giveth protection when lauded, preserving him against harm and reproach, for you O Lord, *rescues* him from all ambush. To this Lord, we have addressed these words, I son of Man, have lauded Agni, the mighy, May we acquire ample wealth with the aid of seers, and be enriched with nourishing food in full abundance!

O Agni, thou shinest with thy radiance through the days. Thou art generated pure, worthy of reverence, from out of the waters and stones, and forest trees, herbs and plants that grown on earth. Thou art our protector and ruler. One who acts according to the holy Law, you become his brother. Those who worship you, thou art a Son to them, and as a dear friend you guard them from every attack. The generous worshippers, who send liberal gifts of kine and steeds, to them who laud thee, O Agni, thou lead both these men and us to abiding happiness. May we in the assembly of the learned speak the truth!

Now laud Agni, as a charioteer, in race praises his own car, so now praise yoking of Agni's car, the bounteous, the most splendid. He

who guides his worshipper aright and withers the foe, without bring himself withered by the age, Agni, the God fair to look upon when offered oblation. He who is lauded, in our homes, whose splendour is magnified at evening and morning, whose law is inviolate. Who shines like the Sun in his splendour, whose flames blaze ever, who sparkles with undecaying radiance. Him our songs of praise have waxedstrong. Now he shines with all his glories. May we with the help of Agni, that of Indra and Soma, yea with the help of all the Gods unharmed dwell, and overthrow those who fight with us!

He, who by birth was chief of the Gods, the most wise, became the Gods's protecotr with his strength and power. Before whose great and mighty deeds the two realms shake, he, O men is Indra, the lord! He transfixed the earth that trembled, and set at rest the agitating mountains, who measured out the vast middle region in the space and propped the heaven, he, O men, is Indra, the Lord! He Smote the Dragon dead, released the seven Rivers and drove the kine our from the Demon's cave, brought forth the fire from between the two rocks, the hero ever victorious, O men, he is Indra! By whom this world can be made to shake, who humbling, swept away the enemy host, who, like a gambler collects his winnings from vanquished enemy, he, O men, is Indra! Many have an urge to know about him and ask where is he, the Terrible? or some verily say, he is not, who like birds sweeps away the riches at stake, have faith in him, he, O men, is Indra! who inspires all, the poor, the humble and the strong alike to work, urging also the priest who sings his songs of praise, the fair-faced one, and him who presses out Soma juice with stones laid ready, he O men, is Indra!

Under whose supreme control are steeds, cars, cattle and villages all, by whose the Sun and Dawns come to birth, who leads and Waters, he, O men, is Indra! Who is called upon by both the enemies in the batte, the stronger and the weaker, by the twain in the same self chariot, each for himself threatened with danger, he, O men, is Indra! Without whose aid one never conquers the battle, whom the fighting warrors continuously implore for help, who moves the immovable, he, O men, is Indra! who smote long before they knew it, with his arrows, the wicked foemen, who pardons not the sinner, who strikes the demons dead, he, O men is Indra! Who

once discovered in the fortieth autumn Shambara dwelling in the mountains, and slew him putting forth his vigour, the Demon lying down, there, he, O men is Indra!

Who, the seven-reined Bull, most mighty, freed the seven Floods to flow at will, and shattered to pieces with his thunderbolt Rauhina, while he scaled the heavens, he, O men, is Indra. To whom Earth and Heaven make obeisance, before whose very breath the mountains tremble, the famed Soma-lover, thunder armed, he, O men, is Indra! Who with his aid helps the Soma presser, and him who brews it and him who chants his praise or offers libations. Whom our prayers exalt and the flowing forth of Soma and these our gifts, he, O men, is Indra. Thou Indra, who grants boons to men who press out and pour forth Soma in libation, art terrible and true. May we be evermore your dear friends and speak loudly in the assembly with our heroes!

For him, who scores victory overall, the Lord of truth, of wealth, horses and kine, for him who is Lord of waters and other resources, for Indra, the holy, shed Soma juice. For him who smashes and destoys the enemy, the ever winner, never conquered, the protector from enemy onslaught, vorthy to rule over all, for heroic Indra, sing your sacred prayer. O Indra, grant us the best of boons, a pondering mind and fortune, increase of wealth, protection to our bodies, the sweet winsome speech, and days that are pleasant and fair.

At the Trikadrukeshu ceremony, the mighty Indra has drunk Soma blent with barley meal. With Vishnu, he hath drunk the juice to his fill and it has waxed him strong to perform his mighty deeds. So, may Indra attain the other God, Soma, the true. He, who is resplendent and mighty overcame the demon Krivi in the battle by his strength. He waxes strong with his might and fills both the world with his majesty. One share of libation he has devoured and the other he has left. So, may God attain the other God.

This hymn to Aditya, the wise and self-effulgen, shall be supreme above all for ever. I beg Varuna, the mighty for fame, the God who exceedingly gracious to all those who worship him. May we possess ample wealth through these hymns of ours, sung in thy service with great care and reverence, O Varuna! We laud thee like

the fires that are kindled each morning with their promise of kine and wealth. May we be ever under thy protection, O Lord of heroes, the king of vast kingdom. O Sons of boundless Aditi, Gods ever faithful, forgive our sins, and admit us unto thy friendship. He, the God Varuna, made the rivers flow. They flow on at his command, their sustainer. They stop not flowing, nor get tired and they run swift like birds in flight in the air. Loose me from sin as from a bond that binds, may our life swell your river of Law, O Varuna! Let not the thread of my life be severed while I weave the web of song, nor my work be cut short before its time, O Lord!

Sweep far away from me, all dangers. O Varuna, accept me favourably you holy Lord ! Release me from my troubles that enslave me, like a calf from its cords. I am powerless even to wink my eyes without your help. Stike us not with dreadful weapons which strike the wicked at thy command. May we never pass into darkness from light. Scatter them for our comfort far away who would harm us. As of yore, we will sing you praise, O almighty God, now and hereafter. In thyself, O invincble are fexed firmly thy stature, as on a mountain. Sweep far away from me the sins committed by me, let me not suffer for the sin of other. Many more mornings remain to shine on us. May we enjoy them as long as we live. O Varuna, protect us from the man, be he a friend or relation who has threatened my peace even in a dream, affrighting me, and the wolf or the thief who wish to harm us. Let me never be deprived of my rich and liberal dear friend, O Varuna, may I never lack well managed wealth. May we speak out our mind loudly in the assembly as heroes!

O Gods, truly ye are our kinsmen, be ye kind to me who now supplicates. May your car never come slowly to our rites, nor we be ever weary of kinsmen such as ye are. I alone have committed many a sin against you, and you chastised me as a sire his gambler son. Far removed be mine offences, and so be your snares. Swoop ye down not upon me as does a bird on its offspring. Come unto us now ye holy Gods, that we with awe may approach to win you over. Protect us, O Gods from the wolf who would devour us. Save us from falling into a pit.

O Father of winds, let your grace shine on us. Let us not be deprived of the light of the Sun. May the hero on his steed be kind to us, may we live forth in our progeny. O Rudra, with your efficacious medicines, which you administer to cure us, may I live for hundred years. Banish from us all hatred and trouble and maladies to four quarters. O mightiest among the mighty, most famed, ye thunderer, escort us across the troubles to our weal and remove all assaults of the wicked. May we never displease you, O Rudra, with worship, by ill-praise or scanty devotion. Restore our heroes to health with your best balms, for I know, thou art the best of physicians.

Where is thy gracious hand, O Rudra, whose benign touch I crave, which heals and grants comfort, which removes the punishments sent by Gods. O Mighty God, look upon me with a compassionate eye. To him, who is mighty, great, fair complexioned, I sing a lofty song of praise. We serve him with lauds, we magnify the splendid name of Rudra. This God of firm limbs and of many forms, the mighty and tawny, decks himself with bright gold ornaments. The power divine of this sovereign Lord, the ruler over the world never diminishes, worthy are you of your bow and arrows, worthy of the multi-hued and splendid insignia. Worthy you are to meet and overthrow any fied, for there is none more mighty than you. Praise him, the car-borne, far renowned, the ever young God, who who slays like a fierce best of the wild. O Rudra, praised and hymned, be gracious to your singers, let your hosts spare us and strike down some other. Just as a son makes obeisance to his sire with reverence, so I bow down to you, O God, as you approach. I praise you, the bounteous Lord, giver of riches. Grant us medicines as thou art praised. The remedies so efficacious and pure, which are so wholesome and health-giving, which our father Manu chose, I beg from Rudra for our wellbeing. May Rudra's missiles deflect and spare us, may great Rudra's wrath spare us. Turn your bow aside from our friends and well-wishers, O Rudra, and be gracious to our sons and their children! O mighty Bull, who never slumbers, slay us not. Here, listen to our invocation. May we speak out our mind in the assembly loudly like heroes!

Savitar, the God who lights up and sustain the world, has risen up

to urge the priest to his sacrificial duty. He grants riches to the Gods, and beatitude to the man who invites Gods to the sacrifice. Having risen up, the God, spreads his arms widely forth for the good of the world. The sacred waters flow in his service, and the winds blow in limitless space. Though borne on swift rays, he will yet unyoke them and stop the car from moving. He controls the haste of those who slink away like serpents. Night follows Savitar closely. Then the warrior, desiring victory, returns from the battle, all the living beings begin to long for their dwellings, and the artisans leave their work unfinished.

As sunset, when Varuna seeks his abode in haste, and birds their nests and beasts their shelters, God Savitar provides a nice dwelling to each creature. Him whose Law is inviolate for Indra, Varuna, Mitra, Aryamen, Rudra and the wicked for-men, the God Savitar, I call upon now for my welfare. He protects us mortals and the celestial Dames. May the Gods, worthy of invocation, most wise, mithty, help us. May we attain bliss, wealth and fabour of Savitar. Way the riches come to us from heavens, and earth and waters, bestowed upon us by the Gods.

Soma and Pushan, the parents of riches, of the Heaven and Earth, the Twain the guardian of the world, are the centre of eternal life. At their birth all the other Gods rejoice. With Soma, Pushan and other Gods, Indra causes to generate the fresh, warm milk Soma, Pushna and other Gods Indra causes to generate the fresh, warm milk in the new milch-kine. O Soma and Pushan, come hither on your seven-wheeled car that moves everywhere measuring out all the realms. This car of your, five reined and yoked by thought, O Gods, moving everywhere, inspires only the chosen ones. Pushan, the diven dwells in the highest realm, and on the earth and in the mid-region dwells Soma. May ye grant us ample wealth, the source of nourishing food and enjoyment, craved so much and by so many men. One of ye Twain, is the Father of all the beings, the other travels forth inspecting all. May ye Gods protect our Yajna, may we overcome all our foemen with your aid. May Pushan, urge our thoughts, may Soma grant us wealth. May Aditi the boundless help us. May we speak out our mind loudly in the assembly of the learned like heroes.

Agni make both the earth and heaven light up by his birth, an admirable son of the two mothers, worthy to be implored. He is oblation bearer of Gods, undecaying, beneficient for food, affluent in radiance, ever youthful, and all-pervading. The Gods with their intelligence, preserving strength and powers, generated Agni. I beign desirous of gaining strength, generate Agni who is like a horse, great and bright with radiance and so vigorous. We choose Agni, eager to acquire joy and strength, him who is praiseworthy and ever so friendly. He is highly desirable, shining with celestial splendour, waxing strong with the sages' laud. The sacrificers, having spread the sacred grass, establish radiant Agni before them in the Yajna and raise ladles to him for happiness. He, the resplendent, beloved of all the Gods, present at all sacred rites, accomplishes the Yajna.

The Agni has filled both heaven and earth and the spacious firmament with light, giving great delight to the Gods by his birth. He is led to the Yajna like a horse. Let the sages ever rever him to win us strength. O learned, honour and serve him, the oblation-bearer, the lord of house, the seer of truth, the friend. He is also the upholder of the law, evermost active and giver of knowledge of all that exists. The three radiant forms of circumambient Agni, which are indestructible, purify all. One of these divine forms has been given to men for their enjoyment. The other two pervade the sister realms and its objects. The people desiring the fulfilment of their wishes, offer him oblations, him the lord of men, the Sage of human beings. He stirs with life when generated and creates a roar like a lion or a laud bellow like a bull. Agni, the beneficient to all, the immortal, bestows weatlh and gifts on his devotees. He, the benevolent, ascendes to the heaven and roams in his on way, as of old. He, the gives wealth to all, as of old, ever watchful and moving. We implore Agni for wealth and prosperity, him who is most radiant, gold-haired and bright. He is verily admirable because he makes us dwell in happy homes and upholds the law.

Agni, the wonderful envoy, goes between the earth and heaven and as the high Hotar-priest of men bears oblations. He adorns the lofty dwelling places with his radiant flames, sent forth by the deities

and made strong with hymns. We, the learned men laud him with sincere praise, the symbol of Yajna. Through him, the noble sacrificers, in association with other wise men, attain happiness and bliss. Agni, the protector and symbol of all sacrifices, the great God of the learned and wise, the ordainer of the earth and other worlds, has pervaded heaven and earth giving joy to his worshippers in various ways, being present everywhere. He the effulgent whose chariot is radiant like the gold, possessing great powers pervades all the dwells in the floods. He, cherished by all, swift and wild, established by Gods, bestows happiness. He, borne on car, moves between the earth and heaven accomplishing many sacred rites, the swift lord of the househod who removes curses. He fulfils desires, destroys diseases and promotes sacrifices in his different forms. O learned men, hymn Agni for good sons and long life. O God grant us proper and nourishing food in plenty, satisfy the learned men, thou ever watchful, desiring the company of other Gods.

For sacrificial act, an exalted priest has been appointed, and Agni the taker of oblations to the higher realms, has been kindled. through Yajna, the oblations offered, soar high to the firmament. The priest has been seated in the centre of the radiant hall and the sacred grass spread for the Gods to rest. May Night and Dawn, praised come hither, through different in forms but smiling. May Varuna and Mitra and Indra in association with the Maruts serve and gladden us. I crave the favour of Agni and Varuna, the two chief of heavens and propitiate them with seven kinds of oblations. They hold truth and ever admire the truth. They always observe their vows and uphold the law.

O lord of the forest, annointed with the sacred oil in sacrifice by the priests, grant us wealth when you stand upright or when you repose on mother Earth's bosom. Set up to the East of the sacred fire, accept our prayer, never decaying. Driving away far from us poverty and want, hold yourself high to give us prosperity. Lord of the forest, lift yourself up on the highest spot of the earth, and give glory and splendour to one who brings a sacrifice, Of fixed and measured one! Well clad and adorned, he comes, the youthful, and yet is firer by far when sprung to new life. The sages, whose meditative mind is ever turned godwords rear him. Born anew, he

is raised up on a day most fair, waxing great in wisdon in the assembly of men. Wise and skilful men consecrate him with hymns, approaching the Gods, the singers chant aloud. O Lord of the forest, whom religious men have so firmly planted, and the axe has fashioned, be gracious to give us riches along with children, O divine post of sacrifice.

May ye posts, filled and fixed in the ground, to which the sacrificial ladles have been raised, which mark the boundaries of the field, bring blessings from Gods full of precious things. The Gods, Adityas, Rudras, Vasus leading Earth and Heaven and earth's atmosphere shall bless our rites and raise the banner of our sacrifice high in the sky. Lkie swan that fly in a long drawn out line, the posts have come to us in various shining colours. Raised high by the learned in the East, they go forth as Gods to Gods' dwelling places. These posts, posts, fixed in the ground and embellshed with circles, appear to sight like horns of horned creatures. Raished by the priests in invocation, may these help us with their aids in the battle. O Lord of the forest, whom the axe has whetted, set in our midst, put forth a hundred branches, and so may we rise with a thousand branches.

O resplendent Agni, we the mortals, mediate upon and communicate with you, whom the sages kindle in sacrifice. You are Lord of men and other beings and giver of happiness. They worship you in their sacred rites as an accomplisher of sacrific and all in all. Thou shine forth in thine on dwelling as upholder of the Law. One, who worships you with fuel acquires knowledge of all the things. He attains strength and prospers from all sides. He, loftly like a banner, has come with Gods, accompanied by seven priest, to him who offers oblations and gifts. To Agni utter lofty speech and offer your best gift, who purifies all and inspires hymns. May our hymns refurbish Agni, worthy of our praise, growing mighty in strength and spectacular as he multiplies. Thou Agni, the best Priest, most venerable, bring the Gods here to the holy men. You are a giver of delight and your radiance drives away our foemen afar. O Purifier, shine on us good wealth and glory. Be ever nigh to those who laud you for their well being. O ever awake and watchful, versed in holy hymns, the sages kindle thee,

oblation-bearer, full of vigour, divine and deathless.

Be kind, O Agni, when we approach you good as a friend to friend, or like parents to their child. Thou burn those up who are great oppressors among men, consume all the wicked who scheme against us. Burn up the unfriendly neighbour, and for-man's curses issuing forth from impious lips. Burn, thou all-seeing, the follish, surround yourself with thy eternal lofty flames. This fuel and sacred oil, O Agni, I eagerly present for strength and victory. With this sacred hymn, as far as I have powers, worshipping, I crave a hundred blessings. Thou Son of Strenght, grant with thy warmth, when worshipped and praised, great vitality and power to those who toil in you service. We have anointed thy body. O Liberal Lord, grant us great riches, as you possess, when enkindled, with your arms for extened, send it to the dwelling of your happy singer

O Agni, repel hostile forces, and drive away our, foeman. O insuperable, surpassing all the foes, give riches to the worshippers. O immortal God, lit up with libation, who calls Gods to banquet, be bleased and came to our sacrifice. Thou Son of Strength, resplendent, ever vigilant, invoked by men, come and sit here on this sacred grass. We sing songs of praise to exalt Agni and all other Gods, and all those enlightened men who attend the wholly rites. Agni, kindly grant you favours and wealth in heroes and prosperity to all your devotees. Make us prospersous in noble and righteous progeny.

O all-knowing Agni, accept this our oblation of Purodesha (a cake with butter) at morning session of the sacrifice, rich in hymns. O Radiant, this cake with butter has been prepared and dressed for you, accept it, O ever youthful God! O Agni, accept this well cooked good food prepared in day time, and lovingly offered, O Son of Strength. Please accept this afternoon food- offering of the sacrifice, of wise and learned Agni. The sages in sacrifices never diminish the offerings due to you, the most mighty. O mighty son of strength, accept this Purodasha in this third course of libation and enjoy. Bear this offereing to the Gods, thou ever alert watchful immoral God. Thou knower of all objects, waxing strong, accept this oblation and well cooked cake, that has been prepared today.

Those who desire you offer Soma. They shed Soma and offer oblations. They bear patiently the calumny and violence of others. Protect them Indra as there is none wiser than you. O Lord of the fine steeds, come hither for even the remotest regions are not distant for thee. These libations are meant for the steadfast and strong. The stones are alid ready and the fire is kindled. Where are now those your heroic powers with which thou alleviated sufferings and did marvellous deeds? Fair visaged art thou, O Indra, performer of great tasks, destroyer of enemies when roused to fight, lord of righteous fellow- travellers. Thou alone movest forth to overthrow the unshakable, and goest forth to destroy Vritra. For the observer of your vows, the heaven and earth, stand firmly like a mountain. O Indra, much invoked, you speak the truth in the safety of your glories, thou Demon and separate. They prop us the mighty Gods. but do not reel under their weight. The One is the lord of all things, fixed or moving, walking or flying this multiform creation. From afar I see the Ancient one, our mighty Father from of old and ponder over our kinship. By singing the laud of whom the Gods, established on their own spacious pathways, go about their jobs.

Mitra, the divine friend, brings men together. He sustains both earth and heaven, ever watching the mankind with eyes never closing. To him offer an oblation rich in butter. He is foremost among the men who brings you offerings, and one who abides by thy sacred law. On him whom thou help never falls the affliction, nor is he ever conquered or slain. May we the mortals enjoying overselves, free from maladies, with our knees bent on earth in obersance, and following divine Friend Mitra's statute, remain in his kind favour.

O Dawn, richly stored, endowed with wisdom, accept our songs of praise. O thou lady of plentitude. O ancient yet ever youthful Goddess, thou movest in accordance with the Law, bearer of all the boons! Divine Dawn, shine forth thou with your rays, on the radiant car engendering pleasant sounds. My thy steeds, well guided, bring you hither, the golden hued and powerful ones. Having arisen, thou Dawn, turn thy face on every creature, standing on high as the emblem of the Immortal. To the same one goal your

proceed each day like a wheel, O newly born, turn your chariot hither like one that lets fall from her a robe, she cometh, the generous Dame, encompassing both the slayer. The boundless heaven and earth are but a handful when thou grasp them.

O Indra, thou last established firmly the unbound vast earth in her seat. Thou hast propped the other two regions as well. Let the floods engendered by you flow freely. The Demon who held the kine secretly, yielded them before thy power. You make good paths for the travellers and travel by them yourself. The lould lauds waxed you strong, Indra, thou much invoked. O hero, you destroy your enemies and fulfil the Earth and Heaven, the Pair who clasp each other in love, full of riches. Come thou near us, and bring thy car of nourishing foods. The Sun never goes against the laws created by the lord of bay steeds. When his journey is over, he lets loose his steeds, and he is Indra. All people during the course of night would gladly look on the broad, bright front of the refulgent Dawan, and acknowledge the wonderous workds of Indra, when she comes in her shlendours. A mighty splendour is stored on her bosom; bearing the ripe milk, the unripe cow comes. A great sweetness lies in her, created for our joy by the God Indra.

The all-seeing and omniscient Sun, the Sage, who looks upon human beings has seen the Earth and Heaven enjoying in their places ordained by the Law. They create a home as does a bird, the nest, though parted and yet together. Though parted, but partners, they stand ever alert on one firm place and being young loves address each other. All creatures they unite Heaven and the Earth and bringing forth light to. Hail the Goddess Dawn and offter her your songs of praise. Exaltantly set in heaven, beautiful to look on, she pours forth sweetness and lavishes her splendour all around. Our hymns have awakened the Daughter of Heaven. She, the Dame generous, comes with her rich light into the two worlds. O Agni. when she approaches shining forth, thou go towards her, eager to share her treasures. The mighty Sun, firm based on the Law, the Bull speeds after the Dawns and enters the earth and heaven. Great is the wisdom Varuna and Mitra, which in her brightness spreads splendour in every direction.

O nourishing, divine Pushan, this our newest and the best laud is sung forth to thee. Be gracious and accept this my hymn, as a bridegroom does his bride. May he who sees all beings together at a glance, may he, may Pushan be our protector. May we meditate upon the excellent glory through our minds the God Savitar we beg of him our portion of the prosperity. Urged by their impuless, the learned men, worship and laud God Savitar in sacred rites. The God Soma, the giver of success ascends to the heaven, to the dwellings of Gods to seat at the seat of Law. May Soma grant us and our cattle the nourishing food, to biped and to quadruped. May he, granting us long life, and removing our foe-like diseases be established in our assembly. May Varuna and Mitra, dear to us like our own life, shower on us sweetness and fat on our pasturage.

Agni, the Gods' envoy hath been sent down here with one accord. O thou eternal learned, devoted to Gods, Agni, they have kindled thee, the immortal among the mortals. O Agni, bring hither your dear and brother like Varuna, who loves sacrifice, Aditya, the effulgent, upholder of Law and guardian of mankind, and the King, supporter of human beings. O Friend, turn hither our friend and well-wisher like a wheel or as a swift steed, and O thou remover of afflictions be nigh unto us. O Agni, find favour for us with Varuna and with Maruts, who illumine the world like the Sun. Bless us, thou effulgent, with progeny and happiness, O banisher of ignorance. Thou knower of Varuna, sweep far away frum us the Gods displeasure. Thou the best conveyor of oblations, the brightest and most refulgent, remove from us all those who are wicked and malacious. Be thou Agni nearest to us with thy aids now while the Usha dawns. Reconcile us to Varuna, be gracious unto us and grant your boons to us, the best callers on thee.

Fashion forth a vast net from your body and fare, farward like a mighty king with his attendants. Entangling the wicked in the net, transfix the foemen with your fierce burning darts. Chase the demons with your whirling weapons, follow them closeby, O efflugent Lord, in thy wrath. Shoot with your tongues, the winged flames from all sides, O Agni, spread thy firebrands all around, unfettered as you are! Send you spies forward, the most swift in speed, be our never failing guardian. Let none bent upon doing evil

to us, from far or from near, venture to cross you. Rise up Agni, sharp arrows. Let the blazing fire that we kindle consume like dry stubble those who would do us evil. Rise O Lord, send them far away from us, who are hostile to us, manifest us thou thine celestial powers. Slacken the bows of the wicked ones, annibilate them, whether they be kinsmen or stranger. He attains your favours, O ever youthful God, who walks the path of high devotion. Shine thou on him, O Lord, riches, magnificence and splendour, fling open for him the floodgates of opulence.

May he be blessed and loaded with your gifts, O Agni, who in his dwelling place offers you regularly oblations and prayers to please you, all his life. Listen, now I hymn you bounteous favours. May you receive this my song like a lover. May we adorn you, O Lord of steeds and chariots, that you may grant us dominion, we desire to serve of our own choice, the radiant one, shining day and night. So we pay you our homage and feel rejoiced in our hearts. Aid us that we may surpass all others in glory. The man who approaches thee with steeds and gold, and comes nigh in a car loaded with treasure, him thou grant favour and protection, and he enjoys your grace thereafter. I your kinsman, destroy the foe with these words and the power that I have inherited from my father Gotama. Mark you these my words, ever youthful, most wise, the Lord of the hearth. May all the protecting forces, ever watchful, eager, speedy, ever friendly and never wearied gather here to preserve us, O God Agni never failing! O God, your guardian rays preserved the blind Rishi from affliction in days of youe, he in his turn preserved the noble ones, O all-knowing God, from them who fain would harm the noble souls. With you, aided by you and guided by you we shall be strong and win riches. Fulfil both our prayers, O God of truth, grant this thou whom power emboldens. Accept this fuel with which we serve you and the song we sing in your praise to win your favour. Reduce now the demons to ashes and preserve us from evil, from deceit and from shame, O friend great as God Mitra!

May Agni with his strong jaws and with fierce blazing flames consume them who violate the Law of Varuna and the commandments of Mitra, the best, most dear friend. They are like sinning young women who deceive their husbanuds. They, sinful,

are false and faithless, they have produced this abysmal region. O effulgent and purifying God, you have given me, as it were, a heavy burden in the form of this Saman hymn, solemn, great and mighty of seven elements, to me who is meek and weak. What is our wisdom and what is our wisdom and what is our wealth? Tell us Agni, for thou knowest. What place is to be obtained and what thing to be doubled in the course of cour journey? What is our limit, what is the Law? Why do we speed to the fray like a swift courser? When will the Sun, the lord of immortal Ushas, pour forth his splendour on us? Tell us why they, unsatisfied with a speed lacking conviction, uninteresting and frivolous, address you here? O Agni, let those who are without arms suffer sorrow here in this world. He who is the most beautiful to look upon, worthy of acceptance by all, rich in splendour, mighty, has appeared in the home. He enrobed in radiance shines most brilliantly, as a house with opulence.

The auspicious presence of mighty Agni, ever victorious, beams brightly even at night with splendour, he makes the fair food look more fair by his light. O God of power, in response to our prayer, disclose for your singer, who sings with fervour, a source of inspiration, the chain of his thought. Give us that mighty hymn, O resplendent Lord, which you and all the other Gods approve. From you issue forth, O Agni, the mighty wisdom, the poetic inspiration and chants most beautiful. From you spring riches, adorned with heroes, for the devotees true and faithful who offer oblation. From you come the hero who wins the spoil, insuperable strength, spirit and help. From you come the joy- giving wealth, sent by Gods, and the swift, impetuous courser.

Agni has gazed benevolently on the wealth giving radiant Dawn. Come. Ashvins to your devotees dwellings, the Sun has risen in splendour. The Sun god has spread his radiance far and wide, unfurling his banner in the heaven like a hero bent on winning spoil. The Gods Varuna and Mitra go their appointed path, lords of constant domains, sending forth the Sun on his unchanged course. Him, who drives away darkness, him whose eye beholding all the objects, is borne onward by seven strong steeds. Spreading like a spider's web, with his mighty steeds, rending the Night's black

robe, comes the Sun. The beams of the Sun god shining tremulusly push down under the waters, the darkess, like a hide. How marvellous, the Sun, unbound, unpropped, he hangs in the apace, without ever falling. By what self-power is he propelled? Who has seen it? He guards the vault of heavent, the sky's pillar.

The God has come to meet the radiant Dawns many a time, the ladies of resplendent resplendent glories. Come on your cars, ye far travelling Gods, come to our sacrifice. Effusing light for all the creatures of the world, God Savitar, the inspirer has risen. He has filled the heaven and earth with radiance, revealing his presence. Rosy Dawn has come, decked in brightness she moves onward. Mounted on her well-harnessed chariot, she wends her way awakening men to joy and happiness. Come hither Ashvins, now at dawn, borne on your mighty chariots. Here is your honeyed Soma draught, offered by us for your delight. How is it that unbound and unpropped, he falls not down? By what self- power is he propelled? Who has seen It? He guards the vault of heaven, a pillar of sky.

Lo, younder goes up the light, and the chariot is being yoked in the high heavens. The chariot is laden with triple pairs of delightful foods, and the fourth, a skin is filled with honey that overflows. Forth come the delightful honey, cars and horses in the wide shinging of the Dawn, rolling aside the stole of darkness that surrounded, and spreading glorious radiance through the atmosphere like the Sun. Drink of the sweet with your mouths accustomed to the draught, for the sake of the sweet draught yoke your beloved car. Refresh the path and its journey with the juice, full sweet is the skin, O Ashvins, that you carry. Friendly are the swans that bear you, gold-winged, sweet, strong, who wake with the Dawn. They rain the floods that cheer, full of rapture, exultant, they come to our Soma libations like bees. Well versed in sacred rites, full of honey, the fires sing to Ashvins at dawn in sacrifice, when the learned priests with pure hands have pressed out with stones the sweet Soma juice. The rays coming nigh chase away the gloom with day and spread shining through the sky like the luminous Sun while drinking the juice. The Sun too goes riding his car and you impelled by your nature, let his paths be known. I have declared, O Ashvins, holding the devout thoughts in me, your car,

that decays not, is drawn by perfect steeds, wherewith you move speedily all over the realms to a devotee who brings rich offerings.

Do thou enjoy our oblations never tasted yet, even as a bard enjoys the spoil. O Vayu, come in thy car of radiant light to the drinking of Soma draught. Put aside all your denials, and drawn by steeds come with Indra for thy charioteer. O Vayu, in thy car of radiant light, come to the drinking of Soma draught. The two dark ones, that hold all treasures and in whom are all forms, wait upon thee. O Vayu, in thy car of radiant light come to the drinking of Soma draught. Let ninety-nine harnessed steeds bear thee, they are yoked by thy mere thought. O Vayu, in thy car of radiant light come to the drinking of Soma draught. Yoke, O Vayu, thy thousand bright steeds to thy car and let it carry thee unto us.

He who hath established with his might the extremities of the earth Brihaspati, the Lord of the triple world of our fulfiment, him of rapturous tongue, the ancient sages set before them to meditate on. The sages in their perfected consciousness, rejoicing created the world from which the being was born. O Brihaspati preserve thou this being. O Brihaspati, for thee they have dug the wells that drain the mountains and with murmuring overflow on every side with their sweetness. Brihaspati, born of vast splendour in the highest heaven, with his seven faces, with his seven rays, with his many births, first drove away the darkness that encompasses us, with his cry. With his cry he broke Vala into pieces and drove upward the Agni that bears oblations. He cried alond as he led them, and bellowing they replied.

To Brihaspati, the Father, the universal Godhead, the Bull we offer our oblations and gifts, O Brihaspati may we acquire riches in progeny and fine steeds. Verily he is the King who with his might conquers, by his heroic strength he made himself the lord of all that in the world exists. The man who cherishes Brihaspati, worships him as foremost and offers him the first fruits of his enjoyment. Verily, he dwells in his own house in peace and to him the Earth ever offers rich food, to him all the people submit themselves, the King, with whom the Brahman goes in front. Resistless he conquers all the riches, both that of his subjects and that of the

people who are hostile to him. He cherished and upheld by the Gods, the King, rules supreme. O Brihaspati and Indra, drink ye of this Soma draught and rejoice in the sacrifice, lavishers of wealth. Let the joy sink deep into ye, grant us riches in steeds and happiness. O Brihaspati and Indra, make us prosper together, may you be ever benevolent to us. Foster our pious thoughts, wake up our intellectual powers, destroy the wicked who bring hatred.

From Savitar, the God, the wise supreme Spirit, we crave that boon which is most worthy to be sought, wherewith he guards his worshipper. His rays may grant us the Great God's boon. Sustainer of the heaven, Lord of the entire world, the Sage puts on his golden-coloured mail Clearsighted, far-spreading, filling the vast heavens, Savitar hath brought us bliss that our lips must laud. He, the God, with his arms outstretched fosters all living beings, urging, lulling all that movers, with his rays. He fills the Earth and Heaven and for his own delight sings a song. He lights up all living things, guards each sacred law. The great, llustrous God, has stretched out his arms to all the beings of Earth, observing his own laws he runs his mighty course.

With his own greatness Savitar has filled the three domains, three realms, and the three worlds. He revolves the threefold Heavens and the threefold Earth. He protect us with his threefold laws. Most gracious God, he stirs life and fulls to rest, the lord of all, that moves and moves not. May Savitar, the God, grant us shelter and security, with triple bars against distress. Savitar, the God, comes nigh with the change of seasons. May he multiply our sons and store of food. May he grant us vigour through the days and nights to follow, and may he send us riches with proeny.

We through the Lord of the Field, as through our friend and helper, obtain nourishing food in abundance for our cattle and steeds. May he be good enough to grant us his favour. Just as a cow yields milk, so pour forth for us floods that bear sweetness dropping honey, pure enough as ghee. May the Lords of the law be gracious. Sweet be the plants for us sweet be the heavens, sweet be the waters, and sweet be for us the air May the lord of the Field be full of sweetness for us. May we follow him unharmed! may happily men

and oxen both plough the furrow, happily the yoke be securely harnessed, happily may the ploughman ply the god! Ee welcome the lough and ploughshare with this laud that they may shower the milk on earth which they have made in heaven. Auspicious furrow, we venerate you, come unto us to prosper, bless and bring us harvests in plenty. May Indra draw the furrow, May Pushan guide right it course, May she yield us milk in each succeeding year! May happily the ploughshare turn up the land, happily the ploughman follow the oxyen. May celestial rain pour down fat and milk. May the Plough and Ploughshare grant us happiness!

O Agni, most ancient, the ancient men who observed the law, enkindled thee for their help, the bright God, the adorable, nourisher of mankind, worship-worthy, Lord of the hearth and home. Of old have men established thee as their foremost guest, the lord of their household, high-bannered, of many forms, benevolent helper, the winner of stakes and devourer of encient forests. The races of men praise you, him who knows well the burnt offerings, discerner, liberal donor of riches, visible to all yet dwellig in secret, the most blessed one, loud-roaring, skilled in sacrifice, glorified with the ghee. To thee, O mighty Agni, we mortals have ever approached with reverence, singing your laud. So now ye be pleased with our sacrifice and burst into flames, enkindled as a God by the hands of mortal man. O thou multiformed Agni, much praised, givest subsistence to every man as of yore. By thy might thou controleth all kinds of foods. That light of thine, when blazing forth may not be opposed. O most youthful God, the envoy and oblation bearer of Gods, they have made thee their shining Eye, ye of wide range, dwelling in sacrified oil and nourished by oblations. Men through the ages have sought thee with holy oil and fuel easy to burn. Thus imbued with strength, thy size growing by the plants, ye spread yourself over all the realms of the earth.

To him, the Lord, the far-famed, the wise Ordainer, ancient and glorious, I offer a song of praise. Anointed with oil is he, the Lord, the mighty Agni, giver of bliss and protector of noble riches. By the power of the sacred sacrifice established in the highest heaven, they maintained the Cosmic Law, they our forefathers, though mortal men yet attained immortal seats, in the high heavens. The ancient

men, avoiding sins, brought him, the irresistible God. May he rekindled conquer all the hostile forces. They stand around him as around a wrathful lion.

O Agni, draw nigh unto us in friendship to deliver and help us. Be gracious to us. Come thou nigh to us, O Lord, wonderous, most invoked, grant us most precrous riches. Hear our call now, lend us your ear and protect us from the sinfulman. To you, O mighty radiant God, we bring this prayer. Shine bliss on our friends.

By the supreme Law strict order is maintained where they unyoke the steeds of the Sun, there the ten hundred stand together. That one the greatest of the Deities, I have beheld there. This is your greatness, O Mitra-Varuna. They (the sun beams) there milk our the floods by the day that stand there Ye twain swell the streams and your single wheel moves on it course. O Mitra and Varuna, ye twain Kings uphold the earth and heaven by your greatness, ye increase the milk in kine, nourish the plants and pour fourth the swift rains in flood. May your well yoked steeds with their well managed reigns bear you down to us. A veil of sacred cloud follows in your wake and the streams flow in your front.

With hands that spare not, protecting the man of holy rites, whom you deliver amidst oblations, O King, from passion, together you uphold the Kingdom propped on thousand pillars. Its form is of gold, its pillars of iron. In heaven it shines like a swift lightning, or shining established in a field. May we acquire of that sweet that is there in that home. Ascend ye Varuna and Mitra to that home whose form of gold, whose pillars are of the iron, at break of Dawn, at the rising of the Sun, and from there you behold both infinity and limit. O Mitra and Varuna, your protection is most strong, vast and flawless. Help us by that may we be victorious and attain peace.

O Guardians of the Law, the law of the Truth is yours in the highest heaven where you mount your car. O Mitra and Varuna, he whom you favour here, is the Lord of peace, for him pour forth the rain is sweetness from heaven. Emperors ye rule over this world of our, the seers of the realms of light. We pray you for rain, for felicious wealth, and immortality. The Maruts, the thunders, roam abroad

through heaven and on the earth.

Ye destroyer of the foe, Varuna and Mitra, we call you by this song, your arms encompass the realm of power as cast around pens of herds. Stretch out your arms with favour to this man who sings to you the praise, for through all the world is sung forth your friendliness. May I go by thy path of Mitra, the friend, that I may attain the goal of my journey. So men go protected under the charge of this beloved Friend in whom there is no harm. O Mitra and Varuna, may I with my song, acquire that which you possess. That shall cause envy in the homes of the masters of wealth and those who praise you. O Mitra, come unto us with thy riches, and Varuna to our assembly so that the wealthy in their homes and your friends may thrive well in increase of riches. With those, among whom you rank supreme, you twain bring us the strength, and the vastness for the winning of our wealth, bliss and prosperity. At breaking of the Dawn when the sunrays flash, O lords of sacrifice, in the force of the Gods come with speed on your trampling steeds to my pressed out Soma juice.

The man who has awakened to the knowledge, becomes perfect. Let him speak for us to the Gods. Varuna and Mitra take delight in the speech of such a man. They are the most glorious Kings, their fame is most wide spread. They are the lords of all the beings, they increase the Truth together, for help, we who travel on fine steeds. They perfect in knowledge, give us wealth. Even out of misery Mitra wins for us a dwelling for living at ease, for him who worships, he has the grace of the hero ever fighting in the vain. May we abide in Mitra's protection which extends to utmost distance, so that we are free from harm and sin, guarded by Varuna as his sons. O Mitra, you set the men travelling on and lead them. Neglect ye not the rich, our lords and our seers of the truth. Be our protector while you enjoy the milk

In truth, ye Gods possess it most bundantly. When you sit in your dwelling of golden light, O Varuna, O Mitra, upholders of mankind, foe-slayers, reach them the bliss. All-knowing and universal are you, O Varuna and Mitra and Aryaman. You keep firm to the Law and follow it and guard mortal man from his

enemy. They are true, they uphold the Truth and hold it in all the beings, perfect leaders in journey, perfect in delivering from distress, and perfect in giving bounteous gifts, which of you, Varuna or Mitra is not affirmed and magnifed by us? Wholly our thought turns to you, the travellers thought turn to you.

Sing ye to Varuna and Mitra with a hymn that enlightens, they, the mighty Lords, theirs is the Law. All-powerful are they, yea, both of them, Mitra and Varuna, Gods magnified among the Gods. Therefore, put forth strength for our gaining riches, both celestial and earthly, for great is your sway among the Gods. By sticking to the Law with Law, you have attained great force, O Gods, ye grow and come not to hurt. With rain-charged skies, and streaming floods, masters of the strength, you take possession of your lofty seat.

Three realms of light ye twain uphold, O Varuna, three heavens, three mid-regions, O Mitra ye waxing strong gurard the warrior in the eternal laws of your working. Ye Varuna and Mitra have fostering cows yielding streams of honeyed milk. Your floods pour forth sweet rains. There stand the three luminous Bulls, who cast their seeds into thee three worlds. I call on boundless Aditi at dawn, in the mid day and at the sunset I call on her. I desire of Mitra and Varuna the safety, riches and progeny in rest and movement. Ye who uphold the luminous regions of the mid-world and the bright sphere, O divine Adityas, O Mitra and Varuna, the immortal Gods never impair your laws, firm for ever.

Far and wide extends your grace, O Gods, ye Varuna and mitra. May I have your perfect wisdom. You are they who grant full security and sustenance, may we be they, O Rudras. Protect us, ye with your perfect deliverance. May we ourselves destroy the destroyers. O wonderous Gods, may be never suffer the control of any, not our sons nor our progeny. O foe-slayers, come with your might, O Varuna, O Mitra, to this our delightful sacrifice. O Varuna and Mitra, ye sages govern every man Fulfil and nourish our prayers. Come, O Varuna and Mitra to our sacrifice that of the charitable giver to drink of this Soma juice.

O divine Dawn, come with all thy splendours, awaken us today to

the great felicity, even as thou once awakened us, O high-born, delightful with thy steeds. O daughter of Heaven, thou break forth today, O high born, delightful with thy steeds. Break forth today, O bearer of treasure, O daughter of Heaven, as once thou broke forth, O still mightier in thy strength, high born, delightful with thy steeds. There are priests who sing thy praise, with their hymns they manifest thee, Bright One. They bear glorious and lavish gifts, O highborn, delightful with thy steeds. When these, thy bands seek to pleasure thee in hope of winning wealth, they set their desires all around, they lavish rich gits, O high born, delighfuly with thy steeds. Grant to these learned men, O Dawn, queen of plenty, fame, affluence and heroic sons. To these princes who shall lavish on us thy riches, O highborn, delightful with thy steeds.

O Dawan, Dame of plenty bring to them high and resplendent fame our rich princes, who shall give us enjoyment of the felicity of horses and kine O highborn, delightful with thy steeds. Bring to us too, O Daughter of the Sky, subsistence in our herds of kine, together with the rays of the Sun, accompanied with the purity of bright and burning lights, O highborn, delightful with thy steeds. Break forth, shining, O daughther of Heaven, tarry not in thy task, for thee the Sun afflicts not with his burning rays as he does the thief and the robber, O highborn, delightful with thy steeds. So much, and more than this shouldest thou give, for to thy devotees thou breadkest forth in thy fullest glories, O highborn, delightful with thy stees.

The divine Dawn, of the glorious journey, of rosy limbs, by Law true to the Truth, who brings with her heaven of light, is worshipped by the sages. She has vision, awakens the man, makes the pathway smooth to travel and walks in front! How lofty is her car, how vast and all-pervading the Goddess, how brings she the splendour before the days! She harnesses her cows of rosy light, harming none, brings perennial riches. She lays down the paths to hapiness, adored by all, she gives every boon. Behold her in the East, coming with changing colours, enrobed in splendour, now she displays her body. She follows perfectly the paths of Order, one who knows and reaches her quarters. See, how luminous is she bathed in light that we may see her. Driving away all darkness and

enemies, Dawn, the daughter of Heaven; has come with splendour. Dawn, the daughter of Heaven, like a woman full of happiness, moves to meet the Gods. Unveiling the boons for him who gives in sacrifice, the Goddess ever young, has again brought the light even as in the beginning.

The enlightended yoke their mind, yea, they yoke their thoughts to Savitar, the one knower of all, he alone assigns the work of sacrifice. Lofty is the praise of Savitar, the creating God. He, the Seer assumes all forms that he may bring forth good for the biped and quadruped. Savitar, the supreme God, lights our heavens and shines after the coming of Dawn. His going forth all the other Gods follw after his greatness. He is Savitar, the radiant God who has by his great powers measured out our earthly realms. To the three shining spheres thou goest being manifested by the rays of the Sun. Thou encompassess on both sides of the Night, yea, thou art Mitra, O God, with thy established laws, Thou alone are the lord of creation and generation. Pushan thou art, by thy goings forth in thy paths, and thou art lord over all this world. O Savitar, the see Syavasva has brought lauds to thee.

Savitar, God, drive far away from us, we pray all that is sorrowful and calamitous. Send us only what is good and lovely. May we be without sin in the eyes of Aditi through the gracious favour of God Savitar. May we have all good and lovely things. We, this day with our lauds, choose the general God, Lord of beatitude, Savitar whose laws are inviolate. It is Savitar, the wise God, who precedes both the Day and Night. It is Savitar, who gives glory to all the beings with the song, bringing them borth.

I invoke with these hymns the Mighty God famed Parjanya, the bellowing Bull with speedy streams, loud roaring who deposits a seed in plants for germination. He flattens the trees and slays the demons; all living beings fear his mighty stroke. From his mighty strength even the innocent flee, when he, thundering strikes the wicked. Like a driver urging his car-horses with a whip, he drives on the messengers of rain. From afar is heard the roaring of the lion when Parjanya fills the heaven with rain- clouds. The winds burst forth, the lightnings fash, the plants shoot up, the heavens pur

streams, the sap surges up in every stem, when Parjanya quickens the earth with a seed. You at whose command the earth bow in obeisance before thee, at whose command the hoofedbeings scamper in fear, at whose bidding flowers wear different colours and shapes, O Parjanya, grant us protection!

Send down, O Maruts, rain for us from heaven, and let the Stallion pour forth his life-giving flow. Come here with your thoudering, poor forth the floods, O our divine Lord and Father! Thunder and roar, deposit the seed. Circle round us in thy car heavy laden with rain. Tip downward your opened water-skin and level the high places, fill in the hollows ! Lift the great vessel up, let it spill over, let the waters pour down and flow forth. Saturate both the heaven and earth with fatness, and let there be thirst-quenching pools in pleny. When, O Parjanya, roaring in fury and thundering you strike the wicked down, then the whole universe shourts in exaltation, yea, everything that exists upon the earth. You have poured down the floods, now stop it, we paray. You have made the deserts fit for travel. You have made the plants flourish for our enjoyment. So, now receive the grateful praise in return!

You, mighty Earth bear the burden of massive mountains on your shoulders, rich in torrents. you germinate the see with quickening power. For you resound now our hymns of praise, O wanderer at will, bright one. Like a neighing mare you drive away abroad the swelling clouds. You hold fast the forests with your great strength, when rains and lightning from the clouds in heaven descend.

Sing thou the hymn sublime, profound and dear to renowned Varuna, the Lord all, to him who tore away , enen as one who skins a beast, that he might spread the earth before the Sun. On the tree-tops he spread out the mid-air, put milk in kine and strength in steeds, in hearts he put spirit, fire, in the waters, the Sun in heaven and Soma on the mountains. Varuna poured forth the waters on the earth, heaven and the mid-air, the lord of waters whose windows open earthward. He, the lord of the universe, floods the earth as the rain floods a field of barley. he floods the vast earth and heaven, yea, when fain for milk, he purse it forth. Then the mountains are cloted with clouds, the Maruts put forth their strength and cast it

down. I will declare the mysterious deeds of Varuna, renowned, the Lord immortal, who standing in the firmament has measured out the earth as it were, with a yard-stick. Vast is his wisdom, the greatest of the Gods, and none has ever hindered or done violence against it. Therefore, all the rushing rivers pour themselves into one sea and yet cannot fill it. Whatever sin we might have committed against the man who lives us, have wronged a brother or a friend, or a companion, against a constant neighbour, or a stranger, remove this sin from us O Varuna! If we have committed a sin like cunning gamesters who cheat at play, or have done wrong or sinned against the law in ignorance, cast away all these sins from us like loosened bonds, and let us be then your beloved ones, O Varuna.

The half of the day is dark, the other bright. Both these revolve by their own intelligence. Vaishvanara, once born, the Sovereign Lord of the universe, has overthrown the darkness with his lustre. I descern neither warp nor woof, nor the pattern of those who weave in the contest. Whose son will speak here so well as to surpass his father without assistance from the Father before him? He who knows the warp and woof, he knows how to weave. He will speak what should be uttered in due course of time Agni, the immortal God knows it and though moving below on earth, he sees beyond others. Behold him, the Hotar-priest, first of all to perform the sacrifice. Among moratal men he is the immortal light. He is born and is firm seated among us, the immortal, ever waxing strong in his body. A steadfast light has been set for mortal men to look on, of all the moving objects the mind is the swiftest. All Gods with one thought, with one intention, march on unobstructed towards that single Splendour. My ears grow weak, my eyes grow dim, but the light that dwells within me grow brighter. Far abroad roams my mind, its thoughts spreading wider. What shall utter? What shall my mind imagine? All the Gods made obesance before the in fear, O Agni, while thou wast dwelling amidst dardness. O Vaishvanara, the universal God, grant us your grace, may the Immortal now favour us!

May God Agni, kindled bright through Vedic hymns, served with oblations, fain for riches, strike the Demons dead. Agni, the Father of fathers, shining ever in his mother's side, removes all ignorance by revealing the Vedic knowldge, the source of all true learning. O ever active Jatvedas, the seer of all, grant us devotion that brings progeny, O Lord, that is illustrious. O Son of Strength, handsome to look on, we the devotees, have poured forth oblations with our songs, O Agni! O Agni who glitters like gold, we come to thee for shelter, as to the shade from fierce heat. Mighty as a hero who slays with shafts, or like a bull with sharpened horns. O Agni, thou breakest down the forts of bondage with thy darts of knowledge. O Agni, thou God, verily yoke thy steeds, the most excellent, to bring thee hither with speed. O God, reveal unto us fully by coming hither. Bring other Gods here to the sacrifice to enjoy the Soma drink. O Angi, sustainer of the universe, ever radiant, of unfading spendour, manifest thy lutrous glory and illumine the world, O immortal One!

The Cows have come and broght good fortune. Let them stay here in our still and be happy near us. May they bring forth multi coloured calves for us, yeilding milk each morning for Indra. Indra seeks to aid him nothing. Increasing his riches evermore, he makes the pious dwell in an inviolate realm. These Cows are never lost, nor robber shall ever harm them, no wicked for ever dare to mislead them. The lord of the Cows, who offers to the Gods in sacrifice, lives long with them. The courser, raising the dust can never overtake them and never do thy resort to the shambles. These cows of the devout man who performs Yajna, roam about the vast pasture where no danger lurks.

These Cows are Bhaga, these cows are Indra, they are a first poured oblation of Soma. Verily these cows are my brother, Indra for whom I long with my heart and soul. O Cows, ye fatten even the thin and weak, and give beauty to unlovely. Make my housebold prosper with your strength. Graze on our fine pastures and be prolific in calves, drink pure water at the springs. Let ye be owned neither by a thief nor by a robber, may ye be spared the shafts of Rudra! Let this portion mixed with the seed of the Bull and thy strength, O Indra, bring to these Cows fertility!

Sing together the praise of the Hero, much invoked, to please him, a mighty Bull, when Soma Juices flow. He, the all pervading God, Indra, witholds not his bounteous gifts of riches in cows, when he hath listened to our songs. May he with his strenght unclose for us the stall of kine, wherever it be to which we may go, led by Indra, the Demon-slayer. O Lord of opulent wealth, these songs of laud have been sung aloud to thee, like milch-kine who low for their calves! It is hard to obtain thy love. You art a Bull to them who crave for cattle and kine. Be to them a Bull who crave for cattle. Enjoy thyself with the juice shed for your pleasure. Cast not away thy eulogiser to repreoach. O God, lover of songs, these our hymns reach thee, sung with draughts we pour as milch-kine speed to their calves.

We, thy worshippers and bards call on thee for strenght to win us wealth. The valiant horsemen fighting in the battle call on thee for help, O Indra, when besieged by foemen. O wonderous God, thunder-armed, praised as mighty, adorable, shower on us wealth in kine and car-horses, the hero's strength. We call upon him who ever active strikes the enemy dead. Thou Lord of the heroes, most mighty, aid us to prosper with thy thousand powers.

O Indra whatever physical and spiritual strength ther is in men and whatever glory there exists in the five Peoples, grant us all these and all manly powers. O God, whatever manly strength in Triski lay and in Purufolk, grant us that in full that in the struggle we may defeat our enemy. O Indra, grant me and these devotees of thine, for their weal, the lustrous refuge that wards off triple afflictions and keep thy shafts far away from us.

Indra the rescuer, God the saviour, almighty, whom we ever gladly adore, powerful lord, invoked by all people, may he, the bounteous, grant us his favours. May he, the God Indra, as Lord of riches and our sure protector grant his succour. Baffle thou O God, our enemies to give us rest and security. Let us have heroic strength and manly vigour. May we be ever in his benign grace, may we enjoy his favour. May Indra, our guardian sweep away from us, even from afar, the foemen, our songs, prayers and verses reach thee Indra, as the streams rush down a slope. O thou

thunder-armed, kine, libations, water and Soma juice, all are thine like a vast bounty.

Hyman Agni with each song in every sacrifice to acquire strength. Come, let us laud him, the wise and immortal God, even as a well-loved friend. Agni, the Son of Strength is our gracious Lord. Let us laud him who bears our oblations to Gods. Let him be our aids and strength, yea, verily a saviour of our beings. O Agni, the resplendent God, most youthful, all purifier, with thy pure brilliancy, kindled by the Seer's hand, shine on us with thy glorious beams, O Agni, one of the eight Vasus, grant grant us your protection along with riches. O wonderous One, thou art the lord of earthy wealth, give rest and safety for our progeny. Prosper our sons and grandsons with thy protecting powers, never negligent but ever inviolate. Keep far from us, O God, all divine anger and wickedness of godless men! O friends, bring her here with songs who liberally pours forth her milk, unbound her who never turns away.

I call upon both Indra and Agni, whose deed in the form of creation of this universe has been renowned from the ancient times. Indra and Agni harm us not! We praise the twain, Indra and Agni, the destroyers of the terrible foe. May they be auspicious to one like me. May they both drive away all our enemies. May they slay our foemen, smite the enemy, the guardians of noble men, O Indra, O Agni, these our songs of praise have been sung for you, who bestow blessisngs. Come Indra, come Agni, with those teams invoked by many, O heroes, for your admirers and enjoy the juice. Ye heroes, Indra and Agni, come to drink of Soma juice, we have poured the libation. O worshippers, glorify that Agni who encompasses all enjoyable things and makes everything without sin with his radiance. He who gains Indra's grace through enkindled fire in the sacrifice, finds a smooth passage across the floods to glorious riches. Give us ye twain, swift steeds to bring the Gods here and pout on us abundant food and wealth. O Indra, O Agni, ye twain I invoke to gainstrength. Ye are giver of food and wealth. I call upon you both to gladden you with the gifts I offer. Come here to us with wealth in kine and steeds, we call you both, the Gods, as Friends for friendship, giving bliss.

Savitar, the God has stretched his golden arms in mighty blessing towards the sacrifice. Like a young and most skilled priest, he lets the fatness drip from his hands over the realms. May we enjoy the vigorous force of Savitar, the God radiant, may he grant us wealth. He, the mighty One, sends to rest and awakens all life that moves on two feet or on four. Protect our home, O God today with thy never failing powers. O God of the golden tongue, keeps us on the righteous path let not the ill-wisher have us in his grasp. This God Savitar, friend of our home, gold-handed, has risen to meet the twilight. With cheeks of brass and honeyed tongue, the God, worthy of laud, gives rich gifts to every worshipper. Like a Hotar-priest, Savitar has extended his golden arms so beautiful to look on. He has ascended the heights of heaven and earth and made each fiend speed away in haste. Give us, O God, fair wealth today and tomorrow and each day that is to follow, O ye the lord of ample riches. May this our song now favour us with your grace enriching us daily with life- strengthening powers!

Great is your might O Indra, O Soma! It were you who performed those first and powerful exploits. It were you who found the Sun, you found the light of heaven, you overthrew all the darkness and all the blashphemers. You Indra and Soma, make the morning radiant and cause the Sun on high to rise with all his splendour. You are a supporting pillar to prop the sky and spread out in all direction, the Mother Earth. You twain smote the serpent Vritra dead, who obstructed the waters. The heavens approved your deeds. You urged the streams to flow fast and filled full many a sea. You filled within the unripe udders of the milch-kine the sweet ripe milk. You have held the unimpeded stream within the many-coloured moving creatures. O Indra, O Soma, ye great Ones, grant verily great riches, which victorious pass to our children's children. You both invest with manly powers the progeny of men, that they may carry the day in the battle.

O Soma, Rudra, the mighty lords, may these our sacrifices reach ye with speed. Fill full our houses with your sevenfold treasures and pour forth blessings on all bipeds and quadraupeds. Let the sickness that may visit us be chased away to four quarters. Sweep away the forces of death and destruction, and grant us glorious

fame. O Soma, O Rudra, provide us with all needed medicines for our bodies. Remove and loosen from us the sin we might have committed, which we have still within our persons. Armed with shafts and other weapons sharp, you kind loving Gods, be gracious unto us. Keep us away from the noose of Varuna, keep us safe from sorrow in your gracious protection.

Thou shaft, sharpened with our prayer, fly away shot from the bowstring, reach the enemy, strike him home and let none be left alive. There where the showers of arrows fall like boys whose tonsure have not been performed, even there may Aditi, the boundless, and Brahmanspati guard us well, protect us well all the days. They vital parts I cover with armour, O hero. May immortality clothe thee O Soma, may the high Varuna give thee more than ample, and may Gods be delighted in thy victory over the wicked! Who wants to kill us, be he an unknown foe or one of our kinsmen, may ally wise Gods torment him. May my prayer be my closest armour.

Agni, the golden God, the Dawn's lover has spread forth his far-reaching lustre. He, the golden here, refulgent, pure, has aroused and inspired our eager thoughts. He, like the Sun shines forth while the Dawn breaks, and the priests sing the saud at sacrifice, revealing there prayful minds. Agni, the most bounteous, who know well all the generations, visits the Golds as the swift envoy. To agni are addressed our songs and sacred verses, seeking the God and asking his kind favours, to the beautiful to look on, of lovely visage, the mighty mediator who carries man's oblations. O Agni, bring here unto us Indra, along with Vasu, bring here the mighty Rudra with all his followers, Aditi gracious to all men, along with his sons and much invoked Brihaspati with the Singhers. Man prayfully worship Angi at sacrifice, the ever youthful God, the priest of joy. He is verily the God of all the riches, an untired envoy to the Gods at the Yajna.

Pour forth oblations in his mouth, the kind God, worthy of reverence, our closest friend and kin. Agni, who has seated himself in every home for people's weal, lord of the house, seer, youthful. May this Agni guard us and our homes from all sides. May he

protect us from woe! I will compose a new hymn of praise to Agni, the falcon, he is sure to give us riches. How fair are his glories to behold as he shines forth at the sacrifice, like one possessed of heroic sons. May he be pleased with our invocation, may our praise find favour with him, the best of worshippers! O, ye worthy of our invocations, lord of our homes, rich in wealth of heroes, may we set you down. Glow forth at night, shine forth at morn, your favour has kindled our homes, by your favour we shall be rich in heroes!

O Indra, the lowest earth is thine, thou cherishest the middle region, thou rulest the highest one. Thou art the lord of the whole world. None can resist thee in the world. Thou art the lord far famed for giving wealth to every one in the battle. O much invoked, all men on the earth call thee for protection. If I, O Indra, were the lord of riches ample as thine, I would give them, O King, to the singer who scatterest wealth and never cast him to woe. Each day would I enrich the man who sang my laud, in whatever place he be. O Indra, no kinsman is better shelter than thee, no father is better guardian than thee. The active man with skill will win the spoil. O Indra, much invoked, I bow unto you with my song, just as a carpenter bends the wheel of wood for smooth motion. They who bestor great riches love not palty praise, wealth comes not to a niggard churl. Light is the task to give all things that are worth giving, O Indra, to one like me on this day. Like cows unlimited we call to thee. O Indra and sing thy laud. Thou all-knowing, lord of the animate and inanimate creation, we bow unto thee. None other divine like thee has ever been, nor ever shall be. None like thee has ever been born on this earth nor ever shall be. We longing for horses and kine, O Maghvan, call on thee. O Mighty Indra, bring thou all this unto us, as thou art rich in treasures from of old and worthy of being invoked in each fray! O Indra grant us wisdom like a sire to his sons. Guide us, on our path, O much invoked, let us live long and look upon the Sun. Grant us that no foe, whoever mighty, unknown and malevolent, tread us to the ground. O heroic Indra, may we through thy aids accomplish all our deeds without any hinderance!

May the God Savitar, chariot borne, rich in treasures celestial, filling the heavens, come hither, dispensing that which makes man

happy, lulling to slumber and then arousing all the living beings. His arms, mighty, golden, sublime, far extended, reach the limits of heaven. Now his greatness is to be highly lauded, even the Sun submits to him his active service. Now, may this God Savitar, strong and mighty the Lord of riches, grant us his wealth. May he, extending his wide spread radiance, bestow on us the food that nourishes human beings. These our songs laud Savitar of gentle tongue, whose arms are full and hands lovely. May he grant us strength Preserve us evermore, ye Gods, with blessings!

Without rest they flow from the depths, pure, ever active, the Waters, the Ocean, their Chief, through the channels ordained by Indra, the thundere. Now may those divine waters, protect me! They may pour forth from heaven, or run through channels made by men, or flow freely, pure and sparkling, rushing to the Ocean. Now may these divine Waters protect me! In the midst of these waters, moves Varuna, the sovereign lord, he who dicriminates man's truth from falsehood. Exceedingly sweet, bright, purifying and clear are these waters. Now may these divine Waters protect me! From them, Varuna the king, Soma and all the other Gods drink strength and vitality. Into them Agni, Vaishvanara has entered. Now may these diven Waters protect me!

O Sun, today arising blameless, thou hast spoken the truth to Varuna and Mitra. May the boundless Aditi, Aryaman and all the Gods, love us while we sing these songs of praise. O Mitra and Varuna, he is the Sun, the all-seeing, who ascends over earth and heaven in the pervading wide and guards all things that moves and moves not, for the seer goodness and crookedness in mortals. Seven shining gold-hued horses has he yoked and they bear him dropping nourishment. He surveys the worlds of Varuna and Mitra like a herdsman who watches over his herds. Your steeds rich in sweetness have risen high, the Sun has ascended to the ocean of pure light and for him the Adityas make pathways ready, even Aryaman, Mitra and Varuna in harmony do so. These Gods, Aryaman, Varuna and mitra discern falsehood in us and chastise. These mighty sons of Aditi grow in the house of Law eternal. These lords of love, purity and widdom who none can repress, give discerning knowledge to him who has none. They impart to him

right vision and lead him along the smooth paths beyond grief and evil.

They are ever watchful with eyes that close not in slumber and lead the ignorant. They carry him in his forward march across the fathomless pit in the river to safety on the other side. The boundless Mother Aditi and Varuna and Mitra, like guardians give peace, protection and happiness to their devotees engaged in sacrifice, in them let us seek all our creation and lineal succession, let us do no violence to or anger these Gods, O ye bold ones! He whom Varuna upholds, removes away from his altar the stains, Aryaman, save us from all who would hurt us, O givers of plentitude. A shining power and a realm of illumination signify their coming together. By their wonderous power they hold dominion. O Gods, we tremble with fear of you, have mercy on us, sit us at ease by your greatness. He who wins favour through his prayer and worship that he may acquire felicity, strength and riches, has his home filled with comforts. For you, O Varuna, O Mitra, this priestly task has been performed in our sacrifices. Lead us safely through all the perils. Keep us safe, evermore, with your blessings.

The Sun, beneficent to mankind, whose gaze rests on all, auspicious God, is coming here. The God, the eye of Varuna and Mitra, has rolled up darkness like a scroll of leather. Sun, the inspirer of men, unfurling his mighty shimmering banner, is advancing. Now he will roll his chariot wheel gain, which harnessed to the shaft, the steeds pull. Emerging radiant from the bosom of the Mornings, he, in whom the singers take delight, ascends. This Sun-god, I hail as my chief joy, who never breaks the harmony of universal laws. This shining jewel of the heavens, farseeing, is rising. Far is his goal, he hastens on resplendent. The people inspired by him, speed about their assigned work and perform their duties. He follows the pathways, prepared by the Gods, like an eagle in his unswerving flight. O Mitra, O Varuna, we long to serve you with worship and oblations, the Sun has already risen. Now Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman grant us release and room enough for us and for our children. May we find fair pathways, good to travel. Preserve us evermore, O Gods, with blessings.

When the Sun has risen today, may Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga and Savitar, the Gods free from sin, bestow happiness on us. May they the sinless protect well our homes and carry us safely over all the distress! These great Kings and boundless Aditi are verily the sovereigns of vast domains, and their laws are inviolate. Early at sunrise I hymn to Mitra, Varuna and Aryaman, the for slayers. May this hymn of praise bring wealth in gold and non- violent strength. May the Sages obtain sacrifice! May we be thine O Mitra, and thine Varuna with our princes. May supreme joy and fine food be our!

So, when the Sun rises, we invoke you with hymns now, O ye charioteers of law, Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman! Adhering to law, born in law, the strength of law, fierce, hater of the false, in their guardianship which provides the best security may we mortals and our friends dwell! May we see the rising for a hundred autumns that Eye of light, ordained by the Gods, yea, may we live for a hundred autumns! O Varuna, O Mitra, come here to Soma draught, the infallible Gods in wisdom. Come here as ordained by the laws of Heaven, free from guile, Varuna and Mitra come close, ye Gods and drink the Soma draught. Come ye heroes, come Mitra and Varuna, accept our oblations, drink the juice, the strengtheners of the law!

From her birthplace in heavens, the Dawn hath flushed revealing herself as ordained by the Law. She hath swept away friends and scronful gloom. She lights up the pathways most auspicious, most noble! Arouse us today to success and lofty fortune, to loftier felicity, promote us, O Dawn! Grant us riches of every kind, O goddess far famed among mortal men, friend of mankind! Behold, the Moming's splendours approach us, everlasting, bright with varied colours. Filling the region of mid-air, they ascend high, producing the holy rites and worship. The Daughter of Heaven, the world's regal queen, yoking her car goes far away and swiftly. She visits the lands where dwells the five tribes, surveying the deeds of the mortal men.

Rich in wealth beyond telling, the consort of the Sun, rule over all riches. She steels our youthfulness, the sages praise her, and the

priests chant the lauds of the effulgent Dawn! She approaches her steeds of varied hues, the red steeds draw the resplendent Morning. On her fair car the beautiful Goddess comes, bringing treasures for her faighful servant. True with the true, mighty with the mighty, divine with the divine, holy with the holy, she has broken down all barriers to release the rays of the Sun, and they greet her with shouts of joy! O Dawn, now give us riches in kine, horses and heroes full of manyfold joys. Protect our sacred grass from trampling feet. Preserve us, ye Gods, evermore with blessings!

Dawn hath come shining like a youthful lady of light, stirring to life every living heing. Now it is time to kindle Agni, for she, the resplendent Dawn hath scattered the shadows. The fair lady, beautiful to look on, with her face turned towards the world, hath risn, enrobed in bright raiments. Decked with gold and bright rays, she sends the world on its daily course. Bringing the Eye of the Gods, the lady of light, comes riding her beautiful white courser. Distinguished by her radiance, Dawn shines apparent, bestowing marvellous wealth on all the world. O opulent lady, come unto us with your bounty, chase away the foe- men, grant us safe and rich pastures. Scatter those who hate us. O liberal one, pour boons on your singer! Send thy excellent beams to guide and sustain us, providing us prolonged days. O Dawn, O Goddess, grant us food and riches in cattle, kine, chariots and horses! O high-born, Daughter of Heaven prayed by ever-more with your blessings!

Behold once again the beams of Dawn approaching. Her splendours diffuse their lustre on high in the sky. O Usha, refulgent, riding thy sublime, chariot, grant us wealth that makes us happy. The well kindled fire rings aloud thy praise, the chanters sing thy lauds. Goddess Dawn approaches in her radiance, sweeping away all darkness and danger. There in the east the Morning has appeared, sending forth light, increasing the lustre, and bringing on the Sun, sacrifice and Agni, while detested darkness flees in the west. Affluent Daughter of the Sky has appeared once more, and all mortals look on her as she advances. Her car, which she has mounted, moves self-harnessed and drawn onward by its team of fine yoked steeds. Urged with loving minds, we and our nobles greet thee this day. Show yourselves favourable,

O Dawns, as you arise and preserve us evermore with your blessings!

Rousing the lands where dwell the five peoples, Dawn has revealed the pathways of the people. The fine clouds of dawn convey her radiance. The Sun with his light has disclosed earth and heaven. The Dawns approach like tribes arrayed for battle, their bright beams paint the distant limits of the sky as the Sun extends his arms. They give forth their light imprisoning the darkness. The Goddess Dawn has arisen, endowed with great riches, getting homage that assures our weal. This Daughter of Heaven, the noblest of the noble, gives varied treasures to her worshippers. Bestow on us, Goodess Dawn, that ample bounty which thou grant to those who sing thy laud. Aloud they acclaim you, like mighty bulls bellowing as you unbar the doors of the firm set mountains. Prevail upon each deity to grant us his bounty. May your appearance grant us the charm of pleasant voices and thoughts for our upliftment as thou arises. Preserve us evermore, with thy blessings!

Behold, the effulgent Daughter of Heaven comes, dispelling the gloom of night that we may see. The friendly lady spreads the light. The rising Sun, the refulgent Star of heaven, pours forth his rays together with the Dawn. O Dawn, O Sun, at your arising may we attain our portion in your light. O Dawn, Daughter of the high Sky, promptly we rise and come to greet you. You most bounteous one, granter of all that we seek; to thy worshippers you give both blessings and wealth. O resplendent one, you light up the earth that we may see it, and also the high vault of heaven. We long to be your own, sharing in your boons. Accept our love like a Mother from her children. Bring us your most wonderous bounty, that shall be famed far and wide. Give us to enjoy the nourishment you possess, O Daughter of Heaven. Grant to our princes riches and immortal fame, and to us herds of kine in contests. May you, O shining Dawan, who urges the wealthy, Lady of fair charms, drive our foes away!

The beings are verily wise because of the greatness of Varuna, who has fixed in their stations the spacious earth and heaven who has

propped up on high the mighty vault of sky and the stars, sho has spread out the earth in front of him. I ponder in my own heart and contemplate the question how again I may be united with Varuna? Would he accept my offerings without anger? When may I have his mercy? Fain to know my sin I ask myself, O Varuna, I seek the wise to ask them, all the sages give me the same one answer, "Surely the great God Varuna is displeased with you". Then O Varuna, what has been my greatest trangression, that you would destroy your singer and friend? Tell me, O all-knowing God and possessing everything, that I sinless may quickly approach thee begging your forgiveness.

Free us from the sins of our fathers, and also from those we ourselves might have committed. O King release us, as a thief is set free or a calf is loosed from its cord. The evil deed was done not deliberately, but it was wine, dice or anger that betrayed us, or the thoughtlessness, or the elder led the younger astray. Even in sleep evil-doing is not wholly removed. I am willing to serve you like a slave, you, the God, free from sin, inclined to anger. This most noble lord gives wisdom to the simple and leads on the learned to riches. O God Varuna, may these songs of praise reach you and lie within your heart. May it be well with us in peace and strife! Ever guard us, ye Gods, with your blessings!

Let me not pass yet, O king Varuna, to the house of clay, the grave have mercy, forgive me, mighty Lord! When I totter like wind-blown skin, O Thunderer, have mercy, forgive me, mighty lord! If through want of wits by ill-chance, I went astray, have mercy, forgive me, mighty lord! Thirst plagues thy worshipper, even when he stands amidst floods, have mercy forgive me, mighty Lord! O Varuna, whatever offence we mortal men commit against the immortal Gods, or in thoughtlessness violate your laws, Oh, punish us not!

O Indra, O Agni, this noblest praise, of your comes our of my contemplative heart, as rain from the cloud. O Indra and Agni, listen to the singer's call, enjoy his songs, fulfil, ye mighty Lords, his desires! O Indra, O Agni, ye heroes, induce us not to sin, nor to slander and violence! To Indra and Agni, we bow in reverence with

hymns of praise. All the holy singers beg the twain for help and aid, and priests implore them to win strength. We learned men, eagerly laud you both, and offer sacred food, longing for wealth and success in sacrifice. O Indra, O Agni come unto us with your favours, ye Gods, who, conquer men. May not the wicked ever control us. Let not harm come unto us from any hostile man. O Gods evermore protect us. O Indra and Agni, let us acquire whatever wealth in gold, in cattle or horses we beg of you.

Vishnu, the God of hundred spendours, strode three times over the earth in his high majesty. He, the foremost of the Gods, stronger than the strongest, most illustrous in fame, lives for ever. With mighty steps strode Vishnu over the earth, being desirous give it to mankind a home. In him the lowly and humble seek safety, he, the great God has given them this whole world. O all pervading God, clothed in rays of light, I a skilled devotee, ever extol thee with this oblation today. Yes, I the poor and weak, laud thee, the Mighty, who dwellest in the realm beyond this region. O God, whom thou proclaimes thyself as all-pervading, with what words can I speak of thy nature? Hide not this from us, nor keep it secret, since thou didst wear another guise in the battle O God Vishnu, I accept thee with my lips as the fulfiller of all desires, be pleased to accept this my offering. May these my songs exalt thee. Do ye, preserve us, evermore with blessings!

O Indra, O Soma, plunge into the abyss the wicked, into bottomless darkness hurl them, that none of them ever comes back! May your fierce might prevail and conquer them. Fling your deadly thunderbolt on the evil-doers from the heaven and from the earth, ye Indra and Soma. Forge out your fatal dart out of the mountain and therewith burn down to ashes the growing race of the fiends. Cast ye Twain your fierce darts of stone burning with flames from the heaven, the scorching darts, never perishings. Plunge ye the wicked in the bottomless depths and let them sink without a sound. Listen ye both to our prayers, and strike swiftly the wicked never prosper, whoever harms us with malign power! Whoever accuses me falsely, a man who pursues his righteous path, may he, the speaker of falsehood, be, O Indra, like water which the hollowed hand compresses. The wicked who harm, as is their habit, the pure,

and with their evil deeds injure the righteous, may Soma send them to the serpent or consign them to the lap of Death. The demon, desirous to harm our nourishing food, kine horses or our bodies, may he, the foeman, thief and robber sink to bottomless destruction with his progeny! May he be destroyed, himself and his children. Let him be consigned beneath the three earths. Many his fair fame who day and night seeks to harm us, O ye Gods, be for ever blighted! The wise find it easy to discriminate between true and false for these oppose each other. O these twain which is true, the God Soma preserves, and brings the false to nothingness. Soma never helps or guides him who is wicked or falsely proclaims himself a hero. He destroys the wicked and him who speaks untruth. Indra entangle these in this noose.

Slay Indra, the male demon! slay the witch who joying triumphs in her magic. Let the idolaters fall with broken necks. May they not see any more the rising of the Sun. O Indra, O Soma, watch ye well, look here, look around. Hurl your weapons at the wicked, against the witch fling your thunderbolt!

Cast us not as a prey to the hateful or the proud, O Indra. Help us thou mighty with thy power and strength O King Indra, we thy devoted friends implore thee and sing thy praise. The learned also praise thee with their hymns. O Thunderer, I praise none except thee in the skilled singer's eulogy. On thy praise only have I thought. The Gods seek out an active man, who presses out Soma, they like not a dreamer. They chastise idleness unweariedly. O God, come into us with wealth, do not deprive us of food and strength. Thou art venerable like a grandfather before a grandson. May he not in anger spend the evening far from us today, like some unpleasant son-in-law.

Priests blend Soma juice for Indra and press out each draught most excellent, for him, the hero, the brave, for his enjoyment. The virtra-slayer drinks the juice. May Indra, who helps us in hundred ways, approach unto us and not stay afar. The two strong coursers yoked by our prayer, shall being our friend Indra here, the song-lover, he stays not far away from us. Come here, blent the Soma juice, come the sweet juice is ready, thou See-like, strong,

fair of visage, come fast to our feast! Our lauds, which we sing for bounty and vigour, wax thee strong. Come and exalt thee, O Indra, God of many a glorious ded! O Song-lover, these our songs and verses addressed to thee, these confirm thy renowned might.

O Indra, drink of the sweet savoury juice, enjoy our draugth and be kind to us. Grant us wisdom, may your favours evermore guard us well. Be thou our friend and may our feast cheer up! In thy kind grace and favour may we still be powerful, cast us not into the net of enermy violence. Guard us, succour us with your manifold protections, establish us well in happiness! May these our hymns exalt thee, thou lord of opulent wealth! The holy sages, skilled in sacrifice, ever pure, sing thy praise in the presence of Agni. This God, to whom thousands of Seers resort for spiritual strength has spread like an ocean. True is his greatness any majesty. I admire his powers at solemn rites where his singers rule, O Indra, all the worshippers invoke thee lone in sacrifice. They call thee for acquiring spoil in the battle, in the mortal struggle we invoke thee. With his powers Indra hath spread out heaven and earth, with his strength hath lightened up the Sun. In him abide all the beings, in him reside the purifying Soma juice. Thy devotees are urging thee, Indra, to drink of the Soma draught first. The Gods of Seasons have raise their voice up and the Rudras have hymned thee as the foremost of the Gods. The mortal men even today as of old praise Indra at sacrifice, where he waxes strong in manly strength in the ecstasy of the Soma juice.

Just as chariots racing in the field of ballte, displaying their strength, conquering foes, bring us wealth, so do these songs full of sweetness, rise unto thee, O Indra, from our hearts. The Seers and Sages like the rays of the Sun gain everything they desire and enjoy that. The learned men sings verses of praise to exalt Indra, O Indra, the best slayer of the Demons, harness thy bay steeds and come from far off realm to us with the Gods to drink of this Soma draught. The poets and bards have called on thee with their hymns at the sacrifice. O Indra, thou Song-lover, as such thou listen to my call! Thou hurled headlong down Vritra from the high heaven and drove away the cows of the deceitful and wicked Demons who had hidden them in the mountain caves.

O Indra, thou art called by men in the east, and in the west, in the north and in the south. Thou art worshipped like a lord by all men, living beings and chiefly by Seers. O God, Though thou shinest alike on beautiful and ugly, and on an affluent man, yet the seers and learned men of the Vedas, seeking after after thee, attain unto thee with songs of praise. Just as a thirsty bull goes to pool of water, so do thou come here quickly at evening and morning and with the seers enjoy divine juice to thy fill. May these drops gladden thee, God Indra that he who sheds the juice may acquire bounty. Thou stole the juice when pressed out and enjoyed its pleasure and waxed mightly strong. With that strength he won more strength and with energy he crushed the demons. O mighty Indra, ever youthful, all thy enemies who slought battle with you, bent down before you like the trees. The man who has won thy favour roams about as if surrounded by a thousand warriors. He begets heroic sons serving you well with prayers. In the friendship of almighty Indra, we have no fear nor feel any exhaustion. May we enjoy bliss and joy through thy favour and glorify your mighty deeds, O hero! On his left side he hath reclined himself. The offered oblations offend him not. The Soma juice blended with honey of the bee is ready. Quickly come here, hasten and drink the juice! O Indra, when thy friend strong in might, fair of form, and rich in chariots, horses and cows, he then with his rich qualities becomes fit to join the company of learned men. Come O Indra, like a thirsy stag to our sacrifice and drink the juice to thy fill. Pouring it down day after day, O Maghavan, thou grows surpassing strong in might. O Adhvarus, let the Soma juice flow because Indra longs to drink thereof. He hath yoked his mighty bay steeds, the virtra slayer hath some nigh.

Like Parjanya rich in rain, Indra is great in his might. He has been glorified with hymns sung by the seers. When the learned men magnify Indra, they offer him gifts and sing hymns of praise of sacrifice. When the learned singers of praise pronounce Indra as an instrument of completing the sacrifice, they declare all other instruments as useless. Before Indra's displeasure all the men and beings bend down as rivers bow down themselves before the ocean. Indra's strength shone brilliantly when he brought together the

heaven and earth like a skin. He severed mighty Vritra's head with his powerful knotted thunderbolt.

Verily I have obtained deep knowledge from my father, and therefore, have become illustrious like the Sun. After the ancient manner, I, like a seer adorn my songs, whereby Indra gains strength. O Indra, only the godless do not praise thee. The sages praise thee. Wax strong indeed when lauded by me! When Indra thundered and rent the Vritra to pieces limb by limb, he sent the waters to the sea. Indra of hero's strength, hurled his mighty bolt on the Demons, he, the dreaded one. Neither the sky, nor the heavens, nor the regions of the earth can contain Indra, the mighty Thunderer !

Laud him, the Lord of Light, the Son of Strength, the messenger who bears oblations to Gods. Agni, the lustrous God, the liberal giver, is wise and worthy of adoration through songs. He is the Lord of sacred food blent with Soma, and has first claim to oblation. We have chosen thee, the most skilled in sacrifice among the Gods, as our Hotar-priest, immortal, wise accomplisher of ever holy rite. May Agni, the Water's son, the ever shining and blessed, whose light is most excellent, win favour for us through sacrifice to Mitra, Varuna and waters in heaven.

O Agni, the Son of strength, glorious friend, whom we praise, bring us bliss. O Agni, reval to us the mind that wins success in battles with fiends, wherewith thou conquerest in war! Dash to the ground the firm hopes of the foe-men and let us overthrow them with your aids. I laud with hymn the friend of mortal men, made envoy and oblation-bearer by the Gods, the best messenger and conveyor of gifts. O Son of Strength, if you were the mortal, and I the immortal, I would not deliver you to evil tongues, O Bountous One, to calumnies. My devotee would not be in distress, Agni or in sin, or be in hunger! Like a son loved in his sire's house, let our burnt offerings rach unto the Gods. O Agni, may I, a morta, with an immortal to help, thou excellent, with thy immediate aid attain my desires. May I collect wealth by thy grace, by thy leading me. O excellent one, thou art my providence, be pleased to be generous. O Agni, he whom thou choose as your friend, conquers with thine

aid, possessing many heroic sons and great deeds.

O matchless one, we call on thee, desiring our protection, possessing nothing of our own, O thunder armed, O Indra, for protection in all our actions, we call on thee in sacrifice. Thou art bold, terrible, mighty and subduer of the foe. We, thy friends, therefore, have chosen thee as our succour and aid. Come here Indra, the juice is effused, thou lord of corn, lord of steeds and lord of kine, and drink of Soma, Soma's lord! We pray thee in our most reverential words. Then, why art thou pondering yet awhile? Here are our desires, here present are our prayers, O generous lord of the bay steeds. It is not that in recent times alone we have obtained thy aid, but in olden times also we had thy opulent riches, O thunderer. We had thy riches and friendship. These we now crave anew of thee, O hero! O Vasu, for the wealth in kine, increase and sharpen our strenght, fair, visored one. I praise him, the same God who of old has been granting us this aid and that blessing, him I praise unto you, even Indra, O friends, for protection. Borne on car, drawn by bay steeds, the lord of men and horses, it is he who gives delight. May he, Indra Maghavan, grant us, his devotees, thousands of cattle and steeds. May we, O hero, with thee for friend, resist one who frets against us in anger. May we win the fight with them rich in kine. May we be victorious in song-contests and challenge the friend, O much invoked! May we strike the foe with our heroes putting forth their strength. O Maghavan further thou our desires. O Indra, since thy birth, thou art foelless ever, independent, all alone without a companion, yet thou longest for a friend in a war. Thou findest not the wealthy to be thy friend for thy flused with the wine of wealth destroy even their friends, when thou thunderest and gatherest, then thou art invoked by men as a father!

Come here Indra, come chariot-borne to the nice eulogy of the Sage. Ye have gone to heaven, by commands of Father Heaven, the God shining by Day. O God, may the pressing stones, bring the here, the Some stones with ringing sound. Ye have gone to heaven, by command of Father Heaven, the God shining by day. Just as a wolf shakes a sheep with terror, so do the stones shake the Soma here. Ye have gone to heaven by command of Father Heaven, the God shining by day! The Sages call thee here, O Indra, for help and

to win the spoil. Here is set for thee the first draught of Soma expressed, as for the mighty. Come here with your plenteous blessings and perfect care to help us. Come, God of lofty mind, of abundant wealth and numerous aids. Agni, the Hotar-priest of men, the adorable God among Gods shall bring thee here. Just an an eagle is borne on its wings, so will ye be borne here on car drawn by speedy steeds. Come here to our sacrifice and Soma juice. Come from the enemy, with thine ear ready to hear our prayer and take delight in our lauds.

May Indra, listen to our these prayers uttered in praise and supplication. May the almighty Maghavan with his thought favouring come unto us to drink of this Soma draught. For him, the refulgent God, the soveregin, heaven and earth have been fashioned forth with power and strength. Thou long for the Soma draught. Thou art the foremost and peerless amongst the Gods, the art present in their assembly. Drink to thy fill, O Indra, lord of wealth, the expressed uice. Thou art famed far and wide, as lord or bay steeds, victor in the fray, conquering even the unconquerable! O Indra, lord of infinite strength, assist us with all thy aids to gain us renown. May we verily follow thee, the hero, the giver of wealth. O God, thou art the increaser of our steeds and multiplier of our kine. Thou art a golden well for none can impair thy gifts. Give me whatever thing I ask for! Come thou Indra; to thy devotee to make him rich. Fill thyself full with the juice, O Indra Maghavan and grant us kine and steeds. Thou, as thy boon bestowest many hundred kinds of riches, yea, many thousand kinds of riches. We the learned singers have brought our hymns of praise for acquiring your grace, O Indra, the dismantler of the forts!

O Indra, make us fearless from that whereof we are afraid! Help us, O Maghavan, for thou art competent to protect us. Drive away our foes and enemies! For thou, O generous God, art verily the Lord of proserity and home. Som we with our Soma shed, call on thee, the song lover. Thou, the Vritra-slayer, art our guard and the best defence against the enemy. May he guard us from all sides, protect us from behind and before, preserve our last and middle most. Guard us from behind, below, above, in front, on all sides, protect us well. Hold away from us the terror sent from heaven, and fatal

weapons. Protect us, Indra, each today, each tomorrow, and each following day! Thou lord of the heroes, preserve us, thy singers, through all the days, both by day and by night! O God, thy arms, exceedingly strong, weild the thunderbolt. Thou art passing rich, a matchless hero, endowed with all manly powers.

Thought, O Indra, thou art called by men from all sides, they invoke thee from east and west, from north and south, yet come here quickly borne forth by fleet steeds. Thou takest delight in effuence of heaven, rich in light or in the Soma juice shed by thy devotees. With songs I invoke thee, O Indra most rich in wealth as cow to benefit us, for the enjoyment of Soma draught. May thy coursers bring thee here, borne on car, thy glory and majesty, O God! Thou, Maghavan would be praised in songs as great, strong and of mighty deeds, come here to drink of the Soma draught. Come, sit on our sacred grass, the Soma is shed, the feast is ready, we, thy devotees are calling thee. O Indra, thou are the life of men, come to us, O lord of plentitude. We call on thee now. The men have milked out the Soma juice with stones, the nectareous drink. Drink. Drink of it and be pleased. Neglect all other pious men skilled in hymns. Come here quickly to grant us high fame. May our king, who gives me spotted kine decked in gold ornaments, rest in peace unharmed. He has given me a gift of gold, pure, shining and of great value besides a thousand kine.

I eulogise Indra, sovereign lord of men, who moves about in his car unrestrained, the Vritra-slayer, most illustrious and winner of the fighting hosts. Honour that Indra, ye learned men for obtaining his aid, in whose sustaining hands of old the mighty thunderbolt was placed as the great Sun was established in heaven. None can attain Indra by deeds, him who works and strenghens evermore. Not even by sacrifice, him, praised by all, unconquerable by might, daring and strong. I praise him, the powerful conqueror, invincible in war, at whose birth the mighty ones bowed in obeisance, the learned and ordinary persons of the world also bent down before him in respect. O Indra, not even a hundred heavens, or a hundred earths can match thee. O Thunderer, not even a thousand suns and both the worlds can match thee. O Indra, thou hast performed many a heroic deed with thy might, yea, with strength, O mightiest. Maghavan

help us to obtain a stable full of kine with thy wonderous aids! The godless mortal gaineth not his desired goal, O thou immortal Indra, but only he who yokes his bright steeds with prayers. Indra harnesses his bay steeds. Urge ye learned men Indra, the conqueror, to give him to be greatly praised, to called in shallows water and in depths, to be invoked in all deeds requiring strength.

Call, ye, O learned men, Indra with your song of praise to drink of your draught of Soma juice, the subduer of the foe, most munificent giver of wealth to his subjects! O men know and tell forth, his name is Indra, lauded much and invoked by many, the song-lover, renowned of old! Indra alone is the giver of might and abundant wealth. May he, the almighty give it us knee-deep! Indra, the handsome to look on hast drunk the rapturous draught, the Soma drink with barley brew. Call him aloud with your songs of praise to drink the Soma draught, for it waxeth him strong. When he hast consumed this gladdening juice, the God of Soma God, with vigour surpasseth all things that exist.

Indra, the warrior whom none may harm, the Soma-drinker never to be overthrown, is the chieftain of resistless might. Indra, thou allknowing, worthy of our praise, send us riches, help us in this decisive struggle! Hence, O Indra, come unto us with food that gives a hundred, yea a thousand powers, come even from heaven your dwelling place O Indra, how rejoice with thy joy of carouse, which is most glorious of all! Indra, the best slayer of demon Vritra, far famed, is the best bestower of might and strength. For that which is thy gift, thou art well known amongst the people, O thou Soma-lover, thunder-armed! For Indra, lover of carouse, loud be our songs about Some juice, let poets sing the song of his praise. We invoke Indra to the drink, in whom all glories reside, in whom all the seven presiding priests rejoice. At Trikadrukeshu rite God expands the sacrifice which inspires thoughts. Let our hymns aid and prosper it. Let the Soma juice pass within thee, as the rivers flow into the sea. O Indra, naught excelleth thee! O thou watchful hero, hy thy might hast taken in the juice, which is now within thee, O Indra! O Indra, Vritra slayer, let Soma be expressed for your drink the juice be prepared for the Gods in your company. Sing well the praise of Indra that the kine and cattle nay come. Sing

adequately that Indra may come!

O Indra, Lord of light, whatever joyous things thou hast broughtest from the wicked prosper therewith thy devotees who laud thy deed, and then whose grass is spread for thee. O Indra grant to thy devotees, who press out Soma juice and give gifts, their share of kine and steeds, which thou hast brought in spoil. Give them and not unto the ill-bred fellow. May he, the godless and riteless man who enjoys his unbroken slumber, O Maghavan, die by following his own device. Show him not the nourishing wealth. Whether O Shakra, thou be far or near at hand, thy worshipper who hath expressed Soma invites thee with his heaven-reaching hymns. O Vritraslayer, lord of long-maneed bay steeds! Whether thou be in heaven's shining realm or in the basin of an ocean or in some other place on the earth or in the sky, come unto us to drink of the Soma draft, O lord of strength and gladden us by granting abundant wealth and thy favours. O God, turn us not away. Be present in our banquet with us for thou art our only refuge, yea, thou art our kin. O Indra, turn us not away! Sit ye down with us, sit beside the draught to enjoy the sweet. Sit beside us to drink the juice and shower your favours on thy singer! O Thunderer neither Gods nor mortals can attain thee. Thou in strength surpasseth all that hath been created. The Gods have not attained thee. All the heroes collectively have made Indra their King, one who is subduer of the foe, form in his seat of power, the great destroyer, fierce, exceedingly mighty, stalwart and full of vigour. The Bards in unison sing the praise of Indra that he might drink the juice, the lord of light whose laws are inviolate, that he might help with his aids. The sages form a ring, bow into him and sing his praise. Ye also, full of brilliance, free from guile, quick in action, should praise and worship him.

Sing ye a Sama song to Indra, sing a great hymn to the lofty and wise God, who is worthy of adoration and loves praise. O Indra, thou art the conqueror, thou givest splendour to the Sun, thou art the creator of all things, the God of Gods and almighty. O Illuminator of the world with thy radiance, thou wentest to the luminous region of the space. The Gods strive to win thy friendship and love. Come unto us O God Indra, ever conquering but never

conquered, vast as a mountain spread in all directions lord of the heaven. O truthful Soma-drinker, mightier than the heaven and earth, Thou lendest strength to him who offers oblations, O lord of heaven! O Indra thou upholdeth all our forts, thou art verily he who sustains mankind and slays the wicked, lord of heaven. O Indra, lover of song, we draw nigh to thee with a longing. We have streamed to thee as waters follow waters! Just as the rivers swell the ocean, so do our hymns increase thy strength, O almighty hero, thunderarmed day by day. The sages yoke the steeds to thy spacious car with their sacred songs, they yoke the bearers of Indra by a song. O Indra give us manly strength, bring vigour, thou doer of manyfold deeds, grant us a hero conquering in war! Thou hast been unto us mother and a sire. So now for bliss we pray to thee, O gracious Indra. To thee, strong, much invoked, the source of all strength, do I pray, grant thou us heroic power!

O Thunder, thy devoted laud-singers gave thee Soma drink before. So listen to them, Indra, who offer thee praise, come nigh our dwelling place! O Indra! lord of bay steeds, meet for praise, rejoice thee for thee we seek. Thy majesty is the loftiest, O Indra, lover of the song. Just as a son inherits his wealth from his father, so do we enjoy all good things from Indra, just as the rays of the Sun receive light from him. O men, laud him who gives us wealth, prompt with his generous gifts. Good are these things that come from Indra. He goads himself to give and satisfies the desires of all the devotees. O Indra, in our struggle against our foe, thou art the conqueror of all hostile people. Thou art father, all conquering, the dispeller of infamy, the victor of the violent. The earth and heaven cling close to thy victorious might, as do sire and mother to their child. When thou attackest the Demons, all enemies shrink and faint at thy wrath, O Indra!

O sacred Soma, conqueror of high renown, flowing on thy way, make us better than we are, Bring to us light, the light divine, and all pure felicities, make us better than we are. Strengthen our skills and mental powers, drive away all our foes, O Soma, and make us better than we are. O purifier, make this Drink, a draught for Indra to drink. make us better than we are. Give us our share in the Sun through your wisdom and grace. Long may we see on the Sun!

Make us better than we are.

O almighty Soma, pour upon us a double share of riches and grace. Make us better than we are. O God, ever victorious, never subdued in battle, pour forth on us your riches. Make us better than we are. O Pavaman Soma, strengthened by man's worship, you shower boons. Make us better than we are. O Purifier, grant us wealth in seeds manifold, life-quickener. Make us better than we are.

The divine Sage, wise of heart, when placed between both hands and pressed, gives pleasant, delightful powers with a roar. Thou forth, O Soma Pavaman, enjoying our laud, to a splendid home, free from guile and dear to men. The bestower of joy like a son, pure and mighty, great son, strengthens law, when born, he illumines his parents the Earth and Heaven. Inspired by intense devotion he has gladdened the seven guileless rivers which have magnified the Single Eye, Soma the Moon.

O men, worship ye Soma, him who is now purified, fain to serve the Gods. The learned priest have blent the sweet and divine Soma juice with milk for Gods. May thou grant happiness to our cattle, happiness to our people, happiness to steeds and happiness to growing planets, O King thy flow! Sing ye learned priests a song of praise to Soma, brown hued, independent in might, radiant, reaching up to heaven! Purifying Soma when shed with stones which are moved rapidly by the skilled hands, and then blend the milk with the sweet juice. With humble homage draw ye nigh, blend Soma with curds and offer Indra to Indra. O God Soma, foe-queller, fulfilling the desires, pour forth prosperity on our kine! O God, sovereign of the heart, thou heart-knower, thou art expressed that Indra drink thee and be delighted. O God give us riches and heroic strength, O Indu, through Indra, our elly.

Effused through the fleecy filter in thousand streams flows forth purified Soma Pavaman to the meeting place of Indra and Vayu. Sing ye men for help to Some, the Sage, shed for the enjoyment of Gods. The Soma juice of thousand powers is clarified to gain stength, and praised to become the feast of Gods. O God, as thou flowest grant us mighty powers and abundant food, Indu, give us excellent manly strength. Just as the horses are urged by their

riders, so are poured forth Soma drops to win us strength, fast through the fleecy filter. May these drops grant us riches in thousands and manly strength, these godlike Soma drops expressed. They flow forth roaring like milch-kine lowing to their calves. They have raced on from both the hands. Thou purified, beloved of Indra, full of joy, roaring, drive away all our foes! O Pavaman, sit in the place of Yajna and sweep away the godless, looking on the light!

The sage Soma has enrobed himself with sheep's wool for the feast of Gods, the subduer of the foe. He grants riches in thousandfold in cattle and comforts! O Soma thou purifiest all with thy knowledge, and graspest all things with thy mind. O Soma, grant us renown! Being purified, O Soma, the wonderous courser, thou has entered into the hymns, like a pious sovereign. He, sparkling, invincible like a courser in the floods, pressed out with hands, is resting under the press. Soma flows on to the woollen sieve like a liberal chief, strengthening the laud.

While being cleansed, the Soma drops flow on. Before blent they are rinsed with water. The milk has rushed forward like a river in flood down a precipice to meet these drops. They come and attain Indra, the God. O Soma, thou Indra's joy, flow on seized and led by the learned men. Pressed out with stones thou Pavaman, runnest to the siever, ready for Indra's high decree. Triumphant to be hailed with cheers, O God, flow for men's delight as the sustainer of mankind! O pure, wonderous purifier, flow on, thou best Vritra-slayer, worthy to be hailed with shouts of joy. Beloved of Gods, pure, purifier of others, sweet and effused, slayer of sinners, he is called Soma.

Flows forth the Soma juices, pure, benevolent, granting riches visible to all of us. O thou Indu, increase for us the splendour from earth and heaven. Be thou the Lord of all the might! For ye the winds blow full of love, for you the rivers flow increasing thy greatness, O Soma Pavaman. Surge and wax ereat. O Soma. May vigorous strength gather within you from all sides! Be the nucleus of all the power. For thee, O brown-hued Soma, the kine have yielded undecaying milk and fatness on the sublime heights. O

Lord of all, thou noble armed, we long for thy friendship, O Soma potent defender!

The streams of Soma like waves skilled in song, speed forward, they march onward buffaloes to the woods. The brown hued, bright juices have flowed with strength in store of kine into the sacred vessels of wood. Let the Sooma juices, pressed out with stones, flow for Indra, Vayu, Varuna, Vishnu and for the Maruts. The three several forces urge us, as milch-kine low for their calves. Soma, the brown-hued flows bellowing on. The young and sacred mothers of holy rites, the milch-kine, have uttered praise, embellishing Soma, the Son of Heaven. O Soma, for our weal, give us from every side, the four seas, filled full of thousand fold riches.

Like a car- horse, flows on with speed the Soma juice from the press, throught the sieve, and spurts into the wooden vat. The winner of the race has now attained the goal. This Soma, pure, watchful bearing with dignity, call on the Gods, flows through the sieve to the honey dropping receptacle. Excellent Purifier, let your lights shine brightly on us now, urging us to mental powers and skill of the hand. He, embellished by the hands of faithful to law and holy men, he is cleansed as he flows in the wooden strainer. May Soma pour all the riches of the heavens, of the earth and those of the airy realms upon his charitable worshippers! To the heights of heaven you soar, O Soma, O Lord of strength, seeking horses and cattle, and in search of heroes!

This Soma, the giver of happiness, the strong, shed for drinking, flows on to the cleansing filter, slaying the fiends and loving the Gods. Far-seeing, tawny-hued, flows Soma through the sieve bellowing to attain his seat of rest. This powerful God Pavaman, speeds forth to the luminous realm of heaven, the fiend-slayer, through its woolen filter. This Soma high above on the place of sacrifice, has made the Sun, together with his Sisters, the Dawns, shine. This Soma, expressed, still the best slayer of Vritra, invincible, the room-giver, has gone eagerly as it were to the battlefield to win the spoil. This God, urged by the sages on his way, speeds on the vats, Indu to Indra, showering boons.

Come unto us flowing swiftly, O God, in thy beloved form, saying,

I am there where dwell the Gods. Consecrating that which is unconsecrated, and bringing store of food to man, make thou the rain pour from heaven! This Soma, swift of course, hath flowed down like a river's wave from heaven upon the straining cloth. Through his strength, infusing lustre, the drops enter the purifying wool, all seeing, sending forth his light. Inviting the juice from the distant world and even from near at hand, the sweet Soma is shed for Indra to drink. The learned priests together have sung the song, with stones they urge the golden- hued, Soma, for the pleasure of Indra to drink.

Engendering the luminous heaven, engendering the Sun in the waters, the Brilliant Soma clothes himself with the waters and the milk. He, according to the ancient plan, flows forth pressed out in a stream, a God among the Gods. For him increasing and speedily advancing there flow the juices with their thousand powers for his winning. Milked out, the ancient fluid, he is poured into the strainer that purifies. He, roaring, has brought forth the Gods. Soma, while being purified, gives all desirable boons, to the Gods who strengthen the Law. O Soma, stream on us wealth in cows, heroes, steeds, spoil and the plenty of food, when thou art pressed out.

O Soma, flow on, be pure and ever more pure, winning cattle, steeds and all that which is delightful. Bring here riches with progeny! O you inviolable, flow forth from the waters, flow on from the plants. Flow forth thou from the pressing stones. O Soma Pavaman, flow on surmounting all troubles and distress, and sit, O Sage, on the sacred grass! O Purifier Pavaman, thou foundest the divien light, thou, once born, grewest great, of sacred One, surpassing all!

Established in delight he flows forth on his way to the dear names in which the youthful one increases great. The great and wise now ascends his chariot of the mighty sun, the car of a universal motion The speaker of the Truth, the tongue of sacrifice, a pleasant meath, invincible, the lord of this hymn, the Son places the third hidden name of the Parents, the Heaven and Earth, in the lustous world of heavens. Breaking forth into flashes he hath bellowed into the jars, guided by men into the golden vat. To him the milky streams of

sacrifice have sung, he shines brightly on triple heights of the Dawans. Pressed out by the stones, placed in delightful hymns, illuminating the parents, the Earth and Heaven, he flows on evenly through the fleece, a stream of honey ever increasing day by day. Flow forth everywhere, O Soma, flow on for our prosperity, purified by the men clothe thyself with the milky draught. With thy rapturous drinks that are strong and smiting, impel Indra to give us wealth!

Wide spread for thee is the purifying sieve, O Lord, as Prince thou pervadest the limbs of the being. The unripe whose body has not suffered the heat of fire, he gains not that delight. They alone are able to enjoy it who have been been prepared by the fire. High above in the seat of heaven is spread the strainer. Its threads shining with light stand extended. His swift juices protect him who purifies. He ascends the height of heaven by the conscious heart. This foremost dappled Bull hath made the Dawn to shine out and cherishing strength sustains all things that exist. The Sages by his lofty wisdom have wrought, the Fathers, strong of vision, set him within as a child to be born. The Gandharva protects his seat, as the supreme and wonderous one, he guards the Gods. Lord of the snare, he seizes the enemy with the same. Those who are most perfect in rites have enjoyed a share of his honeyed meath. Thou rich in food, enrobed in clouds, thou art vast, the mighty seat of Gods, thou encompassest the sacrifice. O King, thou goest up to the war riding thy chariot sieve, and with thy thousand brilliant weapons conquerest the vast renownen!

Like embellishments striving for the neck of victor like the cries of men striving for light, our hymns strive for Soma, who as a Sage is cleansed with waters. His wisdom is like a stall where kine may prosper. All worlds have expanded for him who found the light and revealed the home of immortaity. Our swelling songs, like kine in the pasture call aloud on Soma in deep devotion.

Like a chariot, bearing all his wisdom, the Hero, the Seer, moves about all the world, seeking glory among the Gods for the mortal men, rewards for the skilled, and new things worth praise amidst the divine beings. Born for glory and life to his singers, he, enrobed

in glory has gone to immortality. He, measuring his course, makes the encounter a success. Stream for us food, nourishment, steeds and cattle. Shed light abroad and fill the Gods with joy. All these are easy to achieve for thee, for thou, Pavaman, quellest all enemies!

Be seated, O friends and sing aloud for him who purifies himself. Array him alike a child in festive raiment and bring him offereing. Unite with his worshippers even as calf to its mother cow, this doubly potent, the God, giver of property, producer of happiness, the God-gladdening juice. Purify him who givs power, that he, most blessed one be a feast for varuna, Mitra and their attendants. Our songs have lauded you like lowing cows, as producer of wealth for us. We cover the hue thou wearest with a robe of flowing milk. Thou Soma art the Lord of raptures, gladdening drink of the immortal Gods, as friend to friend, show us the path as the best guide. Drive far away from us the rapacious demon, the godless and the false, whoever he may be Sweep away all sorrow!

Ye learned, sprinkle forth the Soma shed, the best of holy gifts, the friend of man, who hath run among the water-streams, pressed out with stones. More adorous and purified, he flows through the woollen fitter, the invincible. We take great delight when thou art shed, mixing thee still with juice and milk. Expressed for all to see, the seer gladdening the Gods, Soma is verily the mental power. O Soma, purifying all, thou manifests thyself flowing in a watery robe, giver of treasures, thou art the root of Law, O God, a fountain of gold.

When they purify thee, O dear Indu, ever watchful in the sieve of long fleece, thou becomes of singer, thou made the Sun ascend the heaven. Thou best furtherer, generous, sage and singer, clear of vision, floweth forth. Thou art a Sage most loved of the Gods, thou made the Sun ascend the heaven. Extracted by the pressers with stones, Soma goes over the fleecy back of the sheep, goes even as with a mare in a tawany coloured stream, in a sweet singing stream. Down with the water, Soma hath flowed, he hath flowed with kine which have been milked. The gladdenings Soma juices go to the wooden vat as water flow to the ocean, the cheerer flows for the

carouse. Pressed out with stones, O Soma, and filtered through the fleecy siever, thou enterest the vat even as a man enters city having conquered a fort, gold-hued. He like a racing horse beautifies himself through the sieve of long fine wool the munificent. He. the Soma Paraman, becomes the joy of the sages and the holy bards. The delightful Soma hath flowed river-like for the feast of Gods, sweet with the liquor he hath flowed into the vat that drops with honey. Like a dear son he must be cleansed and embellished. He, the glorious one, hath clothed himself in a bright robe. The men skilled in their craft drive him forth, like a chariot driven to the battlefield by a clever driver.

O Soma, full of sweetness, most divine, great gladdening juice, flow thou for Indra! Thou of whom realizing the rapture, Indra, the Bull exhibits his manly strength, having deep dunk that divine juice. He, the giver of happiness and light, most wise, hath come nigh to food and booty as a steed comes to the battle. O Pavaman, thou pure, God, divine, full of brightest splendour, givest all beings a message of imortality. By whom the Priest opened the closed portals, by whom the Sages attained their desires, through whose support they won the renown of splendid Amrita at the place of sacrifice in the felicity of Gods.

Press him out and pour into the vat, praiseworthy speeding like a horse through the flood, him who swims in water and dwells in the woods. The Steer with thousand streams pours about like rain, beloved of the Gods and true in essence. Born in law, he hath grown strong by the law, Sovereign Lord, and the lofty law in itself. O God, Lord of food, make high and splendid glory shine all around us. Unclose the covering of the middle region! Roll forth out of the press, O potent God, like a king, supporting his subjects. Pour forth rain on us from heaven, send us the floods for developing our intellects to win the spoil. Strain him, even this Steer who milks the heavens, him with a thousand streams, bringing rapturous joys, him who showers all marvellous things! The potent one, born immortal, who lends life, and lights up the darkness with his shine. The Sages have praised him well, who by his wonderous might enrobes himself in threefold attire. Soma, who bestows on us riches, milch-kine, food, houses to dwell in,

fine children, is effused by the priests. He whom Indra, the Maruts, Bhaga and Aryaman drink for their felicity, by whom we bring Mitra, Varund and Indra to our sacrifice for our great defence, he is our sound refuge!

Flow on thou sweet Soma, flow forth meath to Gods' taste. Thou divine and bright, flow flow to the vast dwelling place of immortal Gods. Let Indra drink of thy juice of joy for wisdom, let all the Gods drink it for strength! Flow on as a mighty ocean, O Soma, as Father of the Gods to every form. O God flow on, resplendent to the Gods, blissful to the heaven and earth and all living beings! Flow forth thou divine, sustainer of the Sun, flow, mighty One, in accordance to the Law! Flow thou splendid, through the woollen sieve with thy many strreams, O Soma! Let Soma the light-finder, joyous and cleansed, expressed and led by men, make all happiness flow. He, while cleansed, makes all happiness flow. He, while cleansed, protecting the people, shall grant us all treasures for our own.

Flow forth to battle to win Vritras. Thou speedest to quell the enemy like a hero exacting debts. We all rejoice ourselves in thee, O effused Soma, for attaining supremacy in fight. Thou Soma Pavaman, enterest into mighty deeds. Thou Soma, didest engender the Sun with thy might and rain in the high sky, hasting to us with plenty vivifed with milk. Thou didest beget the Sun, the immortal one, for mortal beings, for upholding Law and sweet Amrita. Thou evermore makes the wealth to flow to us. Thou hast with thy might pierced for us, as it were a never drying well for men to drink, led on thy path in fragments from the presser's arms. Then resplendent Gods proclaim their kinship with him as they look upon him and God Savitar open us, as it were the folds of heaven. Some men of old whose sacred grass was spread, addressed the song to thee, O Soma, for gaining strength and fame. So thou hero inspire us now to manly strength. Some priests of old have drained forth from the great depth of the sky the ancient primeval divine milk that deserves the laud. They sang aloud to Indra at his birth. O Pavaman, thou art the lord of heaven and earth and all that exists. Thou shinest like a sovereign Bull among the herd.

We all possess various thoughts and plans and diverse are the callings of men. The carpenter seeks out that which is cracked, the physician the ailing, the priest the worshipper. Flow, Soma flow for Indra's sake! The smith with his seasoned plants, with his feathers of the birds of the air, and stones for the tips, and with enkindled flames of the birds of the air, and stones for the tips, and with enkindled flames seeks him, who has a store of gold. Flow, Soma flow, for Indra's sake!

I am a bard, my daddy is a physician, my mummy's job is to grind the com. Our callings are different, but we all aim at wealth. We follow in its wake like a cowherd after his kine. Flow, Soma flow for Indra's sake! A horse wants to draw a light car, gay hosts like to evoke a laugh and a jest, the male desires his mate's approach, a trog wants a flood to plunge within. Folw, Soma, flow for Indra's sake.

Let Indra, the Vritra slayer drink Soma-juice by the Lake, gathering strength in his heart fordoinghero deeds. Flow, Soma flow on for Indra's sake. Flow thou Soma, the lord of heavenly regions, a boon to men, through the land, shed with vigour and devotion and a sacrificial song. Flow, Soma flow for Indra's sake! Hither has she brought the mighty Soma plant, nursed by God Parjanya. The Gandharvas have caught hold of him Flow, Soma flow thou, for Indra's sake! By Law splendid, upholding Law truthful and speaking the Truth, Soma, the King, is embellished by the pressers. Flow, Soma flow thou, for Indra's sake! He flows on in streams, the great and truly mighty. The Soma juices, cleansed with prayer, mingle with one another, the golden-hued. Flow, Soma flow thou, for Indra's sake!

O Pavaman Soma, where the priest-recites the meterical hymn, moving the pressing stones, exults in juices, through Soma bringing for delight, flow, Soma flow thou, for indra's sake! Where the celestial light ever shines, where the Sunis ever present, in that deathless and undecaying world place me, O Pavaman, beyond any harm's reach. Flow, Soma flow thou, for Indra's sake! Make me immortal in that world where the king Vivasvat's son ruled supreme, where is the shrine of heaven, where the waters are ever

fresh and young. Folw, Soma thou flow, for Indra's sake! Make me immortal in that region, in their inmost heaven, where reams are full of light. Flow, Soma thou flow, for Indra's sake! Make me immortal where vows and eager longings are fulfilled, the realm of the golden Sun, the kingdom of oblation, and joyous felicities. Flow, Soma thou flow, for Indra's sake!

O ye Waters, source of joy, help us to gain strength that we may have great delight. Grant us the propitious sap. You art like loving mothers ever longing to give to dear children. To you we willingly come, O Waters, to aid him, to whose abode you send us on. Waters you are the source of our life and being. The Waters be to us for drink, divine for our help and happiness. May they flow to us health and strength! We beg these Waters to grant us healing balm, who rule over precious things and have supreme control of men.

Within these Waters, Soma has told me, dwell balms that heal, and Agni who blesses all. O Waters full with healing balms, keep my body safe from harm, that I may see long the Sun. Whatever sin is found in me, whatever evil I have done, if have lied or falsely sworn, Waters, remove it from me. This day I seek the Waters, this day we mingle with their sap. Come thou Agni, rich in milk, come and bestow on me your splendour!

Worship the King with oblations, Yama who has climbed up the lofty heights, the Son of Vivasvat, the Gatherer of men together, who shows the path to men. He was the first to show us the way, the pasture which none can take away from us. Men born once tread their own path, the path that our ancient Fathers walked. Matali dwells there with the ancient Bard, and Yama with the Agni's sons, and Brishaspati, singers of laud, both exalters of Gods and by Gods exalted. Some take delight in praise, and others in offering oblation. Come and sit ye this sacred grass, accompanied with the ancient Priests and the Fathers. May the hymns recited by the sages bring you here. O King, may this oblation make thee rejoice! Come, O Yama, with ancient holy priests. Rejoice ye here with Virupas children. I call also on Vivasvat, your father to sit on our sacred sacrificial grass! May our Fthers, the ancient Priests, the Navagavas, Atharvans, Bhrigus, all deserving Soma, may all these

look on us with kindness, may they ever regard us with their grace and favour!

Go forth, proceed along the ancient pathways whereon our forefathers have gone before us. There you shall find both the Sovereigns enjoying their oblations, God Yama and God Varuna! Meet Yama, meet the Fathers with your oblations and pious actions in the highest heaven, leaving sin and evil, seek again your dwelling and wear another body bright with glory. Depart hence, off with ye spirits, flee from here, for him the Fathers have provided this place. Yama grants him a place to rest in, where days and nights rotate and waters flow. Be quick on your happy pathway, and outspeed the brindled two dogs, Sama's offspring, the four-eyed. Then come nigh the gracious Fathers who rejoice there in the company of Yama.

Entrust this man, O King, to the protection of your two dogs, four-eyed watchful, the guardians, the keepers of the pathway. Give him happiness and well-being. May the Yama's two envoys, dark hued, broad-nosed, insatiate, who roam about among the men, restore to us today a happy existence, that we may live long to see the Sun! For Yama pour the Soma draught, bring sacred sacrifice for Yama. To Yama goes oblation prepared and heralded by Agni. Offer to Yama, an offering rich and sweet, and come nigh that he may grant us long days of life amidst Gods. Offer to Yama, to the King, an oblation rich and sweet. We offer our humble homage to Seers of old, to the pioneers who made this path in the days of yore.

May they, our Fathers who in their skill belong to the lowest order, attain higher one, those of midmost may attain the highest, they who deserve a share in Soma. May they who have attained a life of spirit, the knower of sacrifice, the guileless, help us when called upon. Now this oblation is for Fathers who passed of old and those who followed, those who are established in high position on the earth and for those who dwell among the learned and the best subjects. May I attain the experienced and lofty-minded Fathers. I have got fine son and progeny from Vishnu, the eternal. May they who enjoy the expressed Soma juice with libation, seated on the sacred grass, come to our sacrifice. May the learned Fathers who sit

on the sacred grass, come to your aid. These oblations are for them, may they accept these. Come Fathers to us and grant us health and vigour without trouble and sin. May they, the Fathers, worthy of the juices, invited to the sacrifice, come here and listen to our speech. May they favour us with their grace and bless us! O ye Fathers, seated southward with your knees bent, accept pur offerings with favour in this sacrifice. Chastize us not for a sin which might have been committed out of human weakness! O Fathers, seated on the altar the seat of leaping fames, grant reches to the charitable man. Grant to his sons and grand-sons clothes, wealth, etc. to those who who offer oblations in the sacrifice!

Dont's burn his up or completely consume him, O Agni, let not his body or skin be scattered. Perfect him, O ye Jatavedas, the all-seeing and send him on to the dwelling of the Fathers, when you have perfected him, O Jatavedas then consign him over to the Fathers. When When he reaches the realm of spirits, he will be a controller of the Gods. The Sun receives your eye, the Wind your spirit, go, as your merit is, to earth and heaven, or if that be your lot, go to the waters, making your home in the herbs of the field. Your portion is the goat, consume him with your heat, let your blazing flames and splendour consume him! By these your auspicious forms, O Agni, carry this man to realm of the saints. O Agni, convey him again to the Fathers, him who offered to you oblations, now follow his destiny. Let him unite with a new body, putting on a new life, let him multiply his progeny. O all-knowing Jatavedas!

Whatever wound the blackbirds, or the ant, the snake, or the jackal has caused you, may Agni, the all-devourer, heal it, and Soma who has entered into the priests. Shield thee against fire with the hide of the cow, smear thy body with fat and oil, that the bold Agni, eager to consume thee, may not encompass thee with his fierce blaze blaze. Forebear, O Agni to overturn this cup, dear to Gods and to them who merit Soma. This chalice which serves to quench the thirst of Gods, in it the immortals find delight. May fiesh conuming Agni go away afar, removing all sins, may he go to Yama's abode. But may the other forms of the Jatavedas, the all-knowing. bear this oblation to the Gods, for he is skilled. I have chosen Agni as my

God, for worship of the Fathers, he the flesh-consumer, who dwells in your house. May he light flames in the assembly of the learned.

Tvastar predpares his daughter for her marriage. The whole world has nessembled on hearing the tidings, but Yama's Mother, consort of great Vivasvat, vanished while being conveyed to her house. From mortal mer they hid this Immortal woman, and fashioning another like her, they gave her to Vivasvat. She, Saranyu bore him the twain Ashvins and then deserted the twins. May the all-knowing Pushan, the guardian of the world, whose cattle are never harmed, convey thee to the Father's keeping, may Agni escort thee to the Gods, who is ever gracious. May Pushan escort and protect you on your distant path. May Savitar lead you thither where go and dwell the pious and doers of good deeds, who went before you! May Pushan, the knower of all these pathways, conduct us by the ways that are free from fear and danger, going before us the wise, watchful, giver of blessings, glowing, the hero. On distant pathways was Pushan born on the road that lies far from heaven and far from earth. He travels on his way with perfect knowledge to both the realms, most dear to men. During the sacrifice, the holy ones call on Saraswati, Saraswati they worship. May Saraswati grant us bliss, Saraswati adored by pious aforetime.

O Goddess Saraswati, whom the Fathers invoke, thou be seated on the sacred grass, taking delight in our sacrifice. O Goddess Saraswati called on by the Fathers, who come to join our sacrifice, grant food and wealth to him who now offers sacrifice, a portion worth as much as a thousand of an offering! The Mother Waters which cleansed the sacred oil, shall cleanse us of stain with the self-same oil. They remove all defilement. I rise up from them cleansed and purified.

Go away, O Death, pursue the distant path, not travelled by the Gods. I tell you, one who can see and hear. Do not harm our children, touch not our heroes, when you efface Mrityu's foot steps to further time, to prolong your existence, may you be rich in offspring and wealth, live splendid lives, performing sacrifices in honour of Gods! Apart from the dead are these, the living. Our prayer to the Gods have been granted. We now resort to dancing

and laughter, returning to further our span of existence. Here I make a barrier around the living, that none of them this barrier may cross. May they live a span of hundred autumns, burying the Death beneath this mound! As days follow days in close succession, as do seasons one another, as successors fail not their predecessors, so shape the life of these, O ordainer! Attain your prime, then find old age delightful, striving by turns for one behind the other. May he, the ordainer, Tvastar, maker of good things be pleased to grant you lengthened span of days!

May these ladies, unwidowed, with their noble husbands, anointo and embellism themselves with fragrant balms, adorned with nice jewels, tearless, free from sorrow, mount the place where lies he in rest. Rise, O lady, come to the world of living, come, for he is dead by whose side you are lying your wifehood is over with this your husband, who wooed you earnestly by holding your hand. From the dead hand of him, I take this bow that he arried so that it may bring us power, prestige and glory. There you are, and here we are with heroes to frustrate all the snares and attacks of the enemy hosts. Subside thee into the lap of Mother Earth, far-spreading, kind and gracious lady, young and soft like wool to the generous giver! May she preserve you from the lap of Nothingness. O Earth, heaving thyself make a vault, do not press down much on him, grant him easy access, afford him tender refuge, cover him up with your skirt, just does a mother to her child, O Earth! May earth. like a vault over him, propped upon to thousand pillars, lie lightly. May it be his home dripping with fatness, a place of refuge to him for ever. I raise a mound of earth around you. May I be free from harm. May the Fathers support this pillar for you, may Yama give you this as your dwelling place!

Pay homage to the Eye of Mitra and Varuna, offer to the mighty God this worship to the far-seeing Ensign, born of the Gods. Sing praise to the Sun, the son of Heaven. May this speech of truth guard me on all sides, wherever the Heaven and Earth and days are spread. All else that moves finds rest, but never cease the Waters flowing or the Sun rising. From ancient times no godless man can obstruct your chariot when you drive the winged tawny steeds. One of your sides is dark and turned eastward, while with the other, the

lustrous one, you rise, O Sun. By the light, whereby you scatter the gloom, by your rays which arouse every moving thing, dispel from us worthless worship, drive away all disease and evil dreams. Sent forth as a guardian of the law, you watch the weal of every being, and rise day by day without any wrath. May the Gods favour us with our desires and purpose through this our prayer today. May this prayer of our Heaven and Earth, Waters and Indra, and the Maruts hear. May we never lack the Sun-shine, may we live happily and attain old age. Keen of sight and sharp of mind, free from disease and without any sin, with a store of children, may we live long, O Surya, to look on you, rising day by day thou Mitra, our great friend!

O far-seeing Sun, may we live long and look upon thee ever, flooding the world with your glorious radiance, the source of joy of every eye. With your lustre all the living world comes ot life and with your setting again returns to reset. O Sun, golden- haired God, arise each day for us better than the last bringing innocence. Bless us with your beams, bless us with radiance and shining. Bless us in cold and intense heat. Grant us, O Sun, blessings at home and when we are travelling abroad, give us your wonderous treasure. Grant protection to both our bipeds and quadrupeds. Grant food and water that their wants are adequately met. Grant us health and strength and protection against harm, O Gods! If by some grave offece we have provoke the Gods, O Deities, by our speech or by thoughtlessness of mind, lay upon this sin on one who ever plans evils, on him, O Vasus, who led us into distress.

I hymn the fame of Maghavan, who with his greauness protected the Gods, transtixed the enemy when both the Heaven and Earth cried for help in terror. When thou roamed abroad, O Indra, waxing strong in body, telling thy strength among the people, that might was sufficient for thy battles which they tell, but today thou hast no foe nor knewest one before. Who were the sages before us who comprenend the limits of thy greatness? Didst thou not generate thy tather anu mother together our of thine own body? Verily, thou possessest four supreme mightines while dwelling in vastness. All these thou surely knowest and wherewith thou hast performed thy great deeds, O Maghavan! Thou possessest all the treasures, those

made manifest and those lying hidden in the secret. Strike not as under my desire, O Maghavan, thou art he who commands it and thou art he who giveth! To him who established light in the heart of other light and united sweetness to sweetness, to him, to that Indra this hymn was sung by Brihaduktha, when he fulfilled in himself the Brahman.

May this life be now renewed and carried further, as by two carbome charioteers, on their course. May he, like Chyavana attain his goal. Let Goddess Nirriti depart to distant places! Here is a song for wealth, for food in abundance. Let us do many noble deeds to achieve glory. May all our deeds rejoice the singer. Let Nirriti, the Goddess of Doom depart to distant places. May we subdue our foes with our deeds of valour, as heaven spreads over the earth and mountains over the plains. All these our deeds the bard has acclaimed. Let the Goddess of Doom depart to distant places. Consign us not as prey to death, O Soma, still may we look upon the rising Sun! May the full span of life granted by the Gods be ours, may the Goddess of Doom move to distant places! O Yama, the guide of spirits, keep the soul within us and lengthen the span of our life, allow us that we may still enjoy the vision of the Sun. Wax strong in body with the fat we we offer you!

Give us, O Guide of the Spirits, our sight again, give us our breath again and powers of enjoyment. Long may we see the Sun- rising. O Gracious one, grant us your favour and blessings. May the Earth restore us our vital breath, may the Goddess Heaven and mid-air restore it. May Soma once again return our body, and Pushan guide us on the path of peace and prosperity. May with the worlds bless Subandhu, they the Mothers of eternal Law. May Heaven and Earth sweep sway all evil and shame. May neither sin nor sorrow trouble you! May health giving medicines descend on us from Heaven in twos and threes or singly roam about the Earth. May both Heaven and Earth uproot and sweep away all evil and shame. May sorrow never trouble you! Restore the Wagon ox, O Indra, that brought hither the chariot-borne wife of Ushinara. May both Heaven and Earth uproot and sweep away all evil and shame. May sorrow never trouble you!

When the seers began to name objects, then Brishaspati, the Lord of the Holy world, sent forth Speech, the first and earliest utterances that which was best and purest, hidden in their hearts, was reveated through their affection. The sages fashined the speech by means of their mind as corn is sifted with the sieves. Friends see and recognize each other's friendship, their speech bears the blessed seal imprinted. With sacrifice they traced the path of Speech and found her entered in the heart of the Seers. They brought her forth and dealt her among many. In unison the Seven Singers chant her. Yet one hath never seen her, though seeing, and the other though hearing, never heard her. But to some she reveals herself in beauty like a fond embellished bride surrendering to her husband. One man they call dull, unbending in friendship, they never urge him to contests. He wanders on his way of illusion, his efforts fruitless, the speech he hears yield not either fruit or flowers. No longer does he possess a portion in the Speech who has abandoned his own dear genuine friend. Verily vain in his hearing, whatsoever he listens, for he knows not the righteous path.

The friends though endowed alike with eyes and ears, may yet be unequal in quickness of mind. Some look like ponds that reach the mouth or shoulder, others resemble lakes deep enough for bathing. When friendly Brahmins sacrifice together, with impulses from the spirit within, they leave one behind in their achievenments, while some others though counted as Brahmins, stray. Those who fare not forward in this direction, or know not the Brahmins, or preparers of sacrifice, they have attained the speech in sinful fashion, being ignorant, they weave their threads in faulty fashion. All friends rejoice when their friend returns in triumph, being declared conquered in the assembly. He removes their sins, provides them with food. Ready is he for a dead of valour. One with perfection composes the verses, another sings a song in metrical measures. The third, the Brahmin, tells the wisdom of being, while still fourth lays down the rules of sacrifice.

Let us with our skills proclaim the birth and generation of Gods in hymns so that men to come in future know the truth of the past. Brahmanaspati, the Lord of the Holy World, with a blast smelted them together like a smith, in earlier times of Gods, and then

Existence sprang from Non-existence was born, thereafter came to being the realms from the Creating Power. Earth was born from this creating Power, and from her sprang the cardinal points. Daksha was born of Aditi and Aditi was Daksha's child. Aditi did issue forth firs,t the Daksha's daughter. After her followed the Gods, the blessed ones, sharers of life immortal. When ye, O Gods were found in yonder waters close closping one another, then from you a thick cloud of dust arose as from many dancing feet.

When ye, O Gods, like wonder-workers, caused all the worlds that exist to spring, then brought forth the Sun lying hidden in ocean. Eight are the sons of boundless Aditi, who sprang forth from her body, with seven she joined theranks of the Gods, the eighth, the Sun she cast aside, so with her seven sons Aditi went to meet the earlier age. She brought the Sun to earth that he might generate life and die again.

Once our father, the Seer, sat down as Hotar-priest and offered all the existing worlds in oblation in order to achieve riches, and then he entered into later creations as archetypal. What was the place, what the substance? What supported him? How was it created? From what matter did Vishwakarman, seeing all, made the Earth and shaped the Heavens? He has countless eyes on all sides, and has as many faces, arms and feet untold in all directions, he the sole God created the Heavens and Earth and welded them together with his arms and wings. What was the wood, and what the thee from which the Heavens and also the Earth were fashioned forth? Ponder, ye wise men, inquire in your hearts, on what did he stand when he created all these worlds?

Your haunts where you dwell, O Vishwakarman, ever true to the law, you highest and lowest, thy mid-most and the lowest depths, reveal to your friends at sacrifice. Come ye blessed to our sacrifice and thus exalt it. O Maker of all, bring thou thyself here, growing strong with each oblation, come with Earth and Heaven. Let other men loiter here and there in folly, let us have here a liberal portion! Let us now invoke the Lord of Speech for our help, Vishwakarman, the Designer of all things that exist. May he kindly listen to all our prayers, and grant us all his blessings, whose work is ever

righteous!

The Father of vision, the wise, in spirit created in the manner of a ritual both the worlds. When the eastern ends were firmly fastened, then the earth and heavens in their turn were far extended. Most wise and exceedingly strong is Vishwakarman, the Designer, the Creator, the most high Presence. Men rejoice that their offsprings, rich in juice are accepted by One who is beyond the Seven Seers. He is our Father who made us, he is the disposer, who knows all things and every creature. It was he alone who gave the Gods their names. To him come all beings seeking information. To him the Seers of old offered their sacrifice, and also sang in multitude groups as singers. It is he who fashioned this whole world when he distant, the near, and the lower spheres were set in their places.

That which is earier than the heavens, this earth and both the Gods and demons, say what was that, the first primeral germ which the waters received when all the Gods together, they alone were watching? He was the primeral germ received by the waters wherein all the Gods were gathered together. It rested upon the navel of the unborn the one and only one in whom all created things abide. You have no knowledge of him who created all these worlds and things for some other thing has come between you. The singers of hymns who ravish life in their rites go on chanting enwrapped in confusion and ignorance.

He born anew is ever fresh, the emblem of days, the follows the Dawns. Arsing he provides the Gods their portion. May the Moon lengthen the span of our existence. Mount, O Sun, this gold hued chariot shaped from many forms of Kimsuka planks and Salmali wood, strong-wheeled, easy-rolling. Forth to the world of life immortal, make a happy bridal journey for your lord. Get up from hence, this maiden has a husband. God, seek another in her father's home and get the portion from of old assigned you. Rise up from here, Viswarasu, we entreat you with due reverence. Seek you another willing maid leaving the lady alone with her husband, Straight be the paths and thornless whereupon our friends travel to the Wooing. Let Aryaman and Bhaga lead us, let there be a stable union of the wife and husband, O Gods! Now I free you from the

noose of Varuna, wherewith the kindly Savitar hath bound thee. Unharmed I give thee up with thy consort to the law, in the world of goodness. May bounteous Indra lead you be the hand that you may live blessed in fortune with your sons, may the Ashviss escort you on their car so that you may enter your husband's house as the mistress. May authority be ever yours in speech. Happy be thou and prosper with your children there, be ever watchful as mistress to rule over the household. Unite yourself wholly with this man your husband. So authority will be yours in speech till fair old age. Dark blue and red is the Magic sign which clings so closely, now driven off. May the kinsman of the bride thrive well, the husband is bound fast in bonds. Throw you away the dirty woollen robe, give wealth to the Brahmin priests. This female friend, now assuming feet attends her husband as wife.

I anoit with fat the mighty demon-slayer, to the renowned Friend. I come for refuge to him who enkindled and boldened by our rites may protect us from evil day and night. O Agni assail the demons with thy iron teeth and blazing flames. With thy tongue seize the foolish worshippers, rend to pieces and devour the raw, flesh eaters, O God Agni, use thy both upper and lower teeth, enkindled and annighilating. Roam about in the air, of God, around us and with thy mighty jaws attack the evil spirits. Bend thy darts through sacrifice, O Agni whet their points with song as if with a whetstone and therewith pierce the hearts of the devils and tear their arms away raised to attack thee. Destroy annihilate with your heat the workers of magic, destroy the evil spirits with your blazing flame. O Agni destroy with fire the foolish adorers, blaze and destroy this day the evildoer, may each blazing curse of his return and consume him. May arrows pierce the liar in his vitals and Vishwa's net enclose the Rakshashas. The wicked who anoints himself with flesh and blood of cattle, with flesh of steeds and of human beings, who steals the milk away, O Agni, tear off the heads of such fiends with fiery fury. Guard us, O Agni from above and from below, from behind and before. May you flames most fierce, ever blazing wholly consume the sinful man.

A thousand heads has Purusha a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. Encompassing the Earth from all sides, he exceeds it by ten fingers

breadth. This Purusha is all that has been and what is to be. This Lord of immortality waxes ever greater by food. So vast is the measure of his greatness, and still greater is Purusha. All creatures are a fourth of him, three-fourths are in eternal heaven. Three-fourths of him ascended high, one-fourth ramained here down on the earth. From this he spread to every side over- living and non-living things. From him Virat, the shining was born and from this agani Purusha was born. As soon as he took birth he spread himself over the entire Earth both before and behind. The Gods prepared the sacrifice with this Purusha as their oblation. The spring was the clarified butter, summer the fuel, and autuman the offering.

This Purusha, born in the earlies time, the Gods embalmed on the grass as sacrifice and performed their holy rites, so also did the Sers and Sages. From that universal sacrifice the curd dripping with butter was collected. Thence came the creatures of the air, and beasts both domestic and wild. From this universal sacrifice were born the Vedic Richas and Saman hymns, from this came the various meters, and from this were born spells and sacred formulas. From this were born horses, all creature such as have two rows of teeth. From it sprang kine, from it the sheep and goats were born.

When they divided up Purusha, in how many parts did they divide him? What did his mouth become? What his arm? What were his legs called? What his feet? The Brahamin was his mouth, his arms the heroic prince, his thighs became the Vaishya, from his feet came the humble Shudra. the Moon was born from his mind, the Sun was born from his eye. Indra and Agni were born form his mouth, and the Wind from his head, the Earth from his feet, the four directions from his ear. Thus were formed the worlds. Seven were the fencing-sticks, thrice seven the sticks of fuel were formed, when the Gods performing sacrifice, bound Purusha as their victim. Thus the Gods in the sacrifice sacrificed the victim. They were the earliest established rites. The Mighty ones ascended up the heaven, where dwell the Gods and other celestial beings.

These stones, who have like race-horses ten sets of reins and iron bits well fixed in their jaws, and travel round and round. They were

the first to taste the flowing Soma, they were the first to enjoy the milky fluid of Soma stalks. These Soma-tasters kiss the bay steeds of Indra, they are placed on the ox-hide for their task of Soma-pressing. Having drunk the sweet Soma draught drawn by them, Indra growing in might waxes great like a Bull. Strong is your stalk, you shall never be harmed, you are full of sap, ever satisfied, fair like wealth of a rich, in whose sacrifice, O stones, you find delight. Bored deep, but not pierced through, are these Stones, never tired and ever free from death. Immortal, free from sickness, old age and suffering, slim looking, free from the thirst of craving.

Arise, my friends with one mind, endkindle Agni, my numerous companions. I call on you Agni, Sun and the Goddess Dawn, come ye down to aid us. Spin out your songs of praise, be pleasant in your thoughts, make a boat equipped with oars to cross the waters, get ready the implements and let the sacrifice now proceed further, my friends. Fix well the ploughshares, lay on the yokes. The furrows are made, sow now the seed. If your speech is heard with attention, the richer the harvest for our scythes. The learned make the ploughshares ready for ploughing and lay the yokes well on either side. These men possessed of the wisdom gain favour of Gods. Arrange the buckets well in their places, and fasten securely on the straps. We shall draw from a copious well, rich in stream, fair flowing and inexhaustible.

The fool acquires food with fruitless labour, that food, I tell the truth, shall be his doom. He feeds neither a friend nor a man who loves him. Alone he eats, alone he bears the guilt. The ploughshare that ploughs the soil grows the food that satisfies hunger. The traveller, on his legs, reaches his goal, the eloquent priest surpasses that who is mute, a friend who gives is better than a miser one. The Sun with one foot outruns the two- footed man, and the two-footed man overtakes the old man with three. Quadrupeds like dogs come when called by the biped men. They stand and keep watch where five men meet together. The hands are both alike but differ in their work. So do two cows, or offspring of the same mother. The sister milch-cows may differ in their yield of milk, even twins differ in

their strength, or kinsmen in charity.

In the beginning arose Hiranyagarbha, the Golden Germ, born only Lord of all created beings. He did dix and hold up the Earth and Heaven. What God shall we adore with our oblation? He who gives vital breath and manly vigour, whose commands even the Gods obey, whose shade is life eternal, the lord of death. What God shall we adore with our oblation? Who by his grandeur has emerged the sovereign of every living thing that breathes and slumbers, he who is lord of two-footed main and four-footed creatures. What God shall we worship with our oblation? Bu right the snow-capped mountains, the world-stream and the sea belong to him. By his own might they are his possession. The four directions and these heavenly regions are his extended arms. What God shall we adore with our oblation?

By him the mighty Heaven and Earth are upheld steadfast, by him are propped the vast vault on high and light's realm. By him were measured out the regions of the mid air. What God shall we adore with our oblation? Towards him the embattled armies look while trembling with fear. Through him the Sun rises to shed forth his light. What God shall we adore with our oblation? When did the mighty Waters come, bringing the aniversal germ, whence sprang Agni. Then sprang the God's one spirit into being What God shall we adore with our oblation? He with his great might surveyed the Waters pregnant with creative force and generating sacrifice. He is the God of Gods and none beside him. What God shall we adore with our oblation? O Father, thou Creator of Heaven and Earth, by eternal law ruling, pray protect us, O Father of the great and lucid Waters. What God shall we adore with our oblation? O Prajapati, the Lord of beings, you alone pervade all the created beings. Grant us our heart's desire when we call on thee. May we possess a store of many riches.

I move with the Rudras and the Vasus, with the Adityas and with all the Gods I travel. I uphold Varuna and Mitra, Indra and Agni and the Ashivins twain. In cherish the exuberant Soma and Tvastar. I support Pushan and Bhaga. I shower wealth on him who offers

oblation and pours forth the Soma juice in sacrifice. I am the sovereign Queen, the amasser of wealth, most wise, foremost of those deserving worship. The Gods have set me at many places. I enter many homes and abide there in various forms. Every human being who breathes, who sees, who hears the words uttered, attains his nourishment through me alone. They know me not, yet they abide in me. Listen ye all, who know, what I declare is the truth and worthy of attention.

I myself announce and utter the tidings that both Gods and men alike rejoice to hear. I make the man whom I love, a sage, a seer, a priest and make him grow in might. I make the bow of mighty Rudra bend, so that his dart slay the hater of the Holy word. I rouse battle among the people and I have penetrated Earth and Heaven. On the summit of the world, I bring forth the Father Heaven. My home is in the Waters and in the ocean. Thence I have spread over all the world and even touch the yonder sky with my forehead. I breathe a strong breath like a wind and tempest. Within myself I hold all the world and the things that exist. I lord over the earth and the heavens, so powerful I am in strength and grandeur.

Here approaches the Night, with her twinkling eyes that Goddess has lit many a spot, embellished with all her glories. The immortal Goddess has encompassed the whole world, she has filled the valleys and covered the high peaks. She conquers darkness with her light. Approaching quietly the Goddess has once again set her sister Dawn in her seat, and now the shadows will also vanish. Let this Night be gracious to us as we repair to our homes like birds to their nests.

The villagers all have reached their homes, and all that walks and all that flies have gone to rest. Keep off the wolf, the wild beasts, keep off the thief, O Night undulating. Let thou be easy our passage to the other side! Verily she has now come and enfolds me in her black apparel. O Dawn banish them like debts? O Daughter of Heaven, I have brought for thee, my song of praise like a rich offering. O Night accept this laud as for a victor.

The sacrifice is like loom with yarn stretched on every side, consisting of hundreds of rituals. See now the Fathers weaving at the loom, seated beside the wrap and shouting, weave forth, weave back. Here is the Man who stretches it and then unwinds the yarn. These are the pegs, fastened to the place of worship, the Saman hymns are the weaving shuttles. What was the design and the model, what the order? What were the wooden fender, what was the butter? What were the hymn, the meter and the chant when all the Gods sacrificed Purusha in worship? The Gayatri meter conjoined Agni, Savitar combined with meter Ushnish. Soma, the one lauded in hymns, joined Anushtup and Brishaspati was aided by Brihati. Varuna and Mitra took to Viraj. The Trishtup was Indra's companion day by day, while the meter Jagati joined all the Gods together. So to this, arrangement the seers conformed. This same arrangement was followed by the Seers and our Fathers. With my mind's eye, I think I can see them all who first of all performed the sacrifice. They who were well versed in rites, meters, and hymns, were the Seven Godlike Seers of old. Now the sages follow the path traced out by the ancient seers, they have taken up the reins like charioteers.

Near the tree decked in fine leaves where Yama drinks with Gods, he, the Father Yama, the lord of the home, attends with affection our ancient forefathers. I looked reluctantly on him who tended our ancient sires, on him who treads the path of evil and then longed to see him again.

Withou seeing it you mounted, O child, the new, wheel-less car, shaped by your mind. It is one-poled yet it goes in every direction. This car which you have made to roll away from the priests. O child, was followed by a Saman chant, conveyed on a boat from here to there. Who was the father of the child? Who made the car roll away? Who can tell this to us today how the funeral gift was made? At the placing of the funeral gift, a flame at once appeared. It spread first in the front, and later a passage was contrived behind. Such is the seat of Yama, which is also called the home of Gods. Here ministrels play on flute for Yama, here he is magnified with songs.

The Sun with long loose of hair supports Agni, he upholds moisture, earth and heaven. He is verily light himself, the long-haired Muni. Girdled with the wind, the Munis wear garment soiled in ocher hue. They, the ascetics follow the swift wind's course and walk the path the Gods have troden before. Possessed they declare, with our austerities we ride the winds as steeds. You mortal men below see our bodies alone. The Muni aids each God in his work as a friend and associate. He flies through the realm of air, viewing the various forms of things. Ridden by the wind, friend of Vayu, urged by the Gods, the Muni is at home in both the seas, the eastern and western oceans. He walks the path of all the spirits, of Gandharvas, Apsaras and sylvan beasts. He knows their desires, he is their fair friend, he the long haired Muni. The Vayu has churned and nature, the long-haired Muni has drunk with Rudra, from the cup.

Goddess of the forest. Goddess of the wild, slipping away from the sight, how is it that you avoid the human habitation. Are you not afraid alone? When the grasshopper replies the cicada's shrill call, it is the Goddess of wild they welcome with their praise as with tinkling of the bells. Cows seem to graze yonder in a pasture, which looks like a dwelling place. Is that a cart with creaking wheels? Or else the Goddess of the wild passes. Hark, there is a man calling his cows, another there is felling a tree. At evening the dweller in the forest fancies he hears someone screamed. The Goddess of the woods slay never, unless one comes bent on murder. One may eat her luscious fruits and take rest, even as he wills under a shald. O Goddess of the woods, embellished with fragrance and sweet smelling balms, thou Mother of all wild beast, you need not toil for food, now I bow to you.

By Faith is fire kindled, by Faith is oblation offered. We sing to Faith now, the height of joy. O Faith, bless him who who gives, bless him who fain would give, but has not. Bless thou the liberal sacrificer, bless the song I sing now. Even as the Gods evoked Faith from the mighty Asuras, so let my prayer for the liberal worshippers be accepted. Led by Vayu, Gods and men rever Faith at their sacrifice. Faith is made of the yearnings of the heart and opulence comes though it. Faith at Dawn, Faith at noon and at the

sunset we invocate. O Faith, grant us faith!

May the Sun in the highest sky guard us, may the Wind protect us from the airy spaces, and may Agni be our guardian in terrestrial places! May Savitar, whose flames deserve a thousand sacred offerings, be pleased with us! May he preserve us from falling lightnings. May he, the God of grant us light, and may the celestial summits also give us light! May the Creator grant us sight! Grant sight to our eyes, sight to our bodies so that we may see. May we see the world and survey the things at a single glance! Thus, O Sun, may we look on you, most beautiful to look on. May we see clearly with the eyes of men!

Oh, the Wind-chariot, its strength and glory! It goes crashing with a voice of thunder. The regions are red, so are the heavens, the earth covered with dust, the Wind passes. The Wind-hosts hurry along the path of Vayu, and follow him like dames to an assembly. Car-borne, he speeds forth attended by his hosts, the Sovereign of the world. He neither rests for slumber even for a single day but travels on the pathways of the air.

O almighty Agni, who gathers up all that is precious for thy devotee. Kindled on the altar of sacrifice, give us all your treasures. Come together, converse with one another in the assembly. Let your minds be of one accord. Just as Gods in ancient times sat down in perfect harmony to receive their appointed share of the sacrifice. United by your assembly, united the minds, and so be your thoughts and counsel. A common plan I propose before you, a single sacrifice I lay. One and the same be your resolve, and your minds in harmony, united by your thought that you may long together dwell in happy accord.

Rites of the Rounds of Life

The round of the samskaras begins with a ceremony called *garbhadhana* (impregnation), which is intended for the moment of a child's conception. The next rite is a *puinsavana* (male-producing rite) prescribed for the fourth or fifth month of a wife's pregnancy and thought to ensure the birth of a male child. Also during pregnancy there is a charming rife known as the *simantonnayana*

(parting of the hair). The husband applies to the parting line of his wife's hair a red cos metic powder believed to protect against malignant spirits that make pregnancy dangerous. The setting is the family hearth, where the husband sits down beside his wife and uses a porcupine quill or the shaft of a spindle as a rude comb for making the required part.

The *jatakarman* (birth ceremony) includes a host of practices intended to help the mother through the dangers of labor. A brahman comes and examines all the ropes and cords in the house, for the purpose of untying all the knots they may contain. The father is kept busy with a series of subordinate rituals to ensure that the baby will be intelligent, strong, and long-lived. The safe arrival of the child is celebrated by distributing alms at the door and giving gifts to friends and brahmans. The *namakarana* (naming) is a ritual that usually follows in about ten or twelve days. In consultation with a family brahman who knows the rules of Hindu name formation, the parents select for the child a secret and a public name. The father announces the public name to an assembly of guests who include brahmans and relatives and the family ancestors, as unseen presences. All, including the ancestors, then join in a feast.

In the sixth month after a child's birth, the *annaprasana* (Feeding ceremony) is held. The principal performer is the baby, who takes its first bite of solid food. Then the gathered adults celebrate the child's accomplishment by eating an elaborate meal themselves. The first haircut, which usually takes place in a male child's third year, becomes a formal celebration known as the cudakarana (queue- forming ceremony). The child is held in the mother's lap while the nervous father takes a razor and makes the first few shearing strokes. Then the firm hand of the family barber finishes the trim, leaving only the sacred tuft, the cuda, at the crown of the head. Many males continue to wear the cuda all their lives as a mark of a high-caste Hindu man.

The *upanayana* (initiation ceremony) is one of the great events of Hindu boyhood. It is the ritual occasion at which a boy is presented to his religious teacher to begin instruction in the Vedas.

Undergiong the upanayana entitles a boy to begin the life of an upper-class Hindu. Before his initiation into vedic study his rank is equal to that of a sudra, and if the upanayana is not performed he will remain a low person, not entitled to participate in rituals involving vedic texts or to marry a girl from a from a family comparable to his own. The upanayana should be performed when a boy is between the ages of eight and twelve, and it must be performed when a boy is between the ages of eight and twelve, and it must be performed before he is twenty-four.

The essential parts ofthe ceremony are the meeting of the boy with his brahman teacher and the beginning of instruction in the correct recitation of the Vedas. The boy spends the night before the ceremony in complete silence. At breakfast he sits with his mother at a meal for the last time; henceforth he will eat with the men of the family. He then bathes and is led to a canopy under which his teacher waits. The boy formally accepts the man as his guru, or personal religious preceptor. The guru drapes over the boy's shoulder and chest a circlet of sacred thread (*yajnopavita*) to be worn always there after as the second necessary mark of a twice-born Hindu man.

The boy then begins his study of the Vedas, through which he will be "norn again" spiritually into the heritage of vedic learning and become a member of one of the twice-born varnas (a brahman, ksatriya, or vaisya). Even if—as is usual now—his vedic studies proceed no further, he is no longer a boy in religious matters, but an adult and a member of an elite.

The Hindu wedding (*vivaha*) is a group of social customs focusing on a central uniting sacrament. The first action is the parents search for a suitable match. The parents make their choice and solemnize it in a formal betrothal of their children, and then they decide—with the help of the family astrologer—on a favorable day for the marriage ritual. On that day the bridegroom travels in procession with many friends and relatives to the bride's house, where he is received with formal honors. The rites that follow are conducted by a brahman priest who specializes in weddings. The prominent elements in the proceedings are intended to unite the new couple

visibly, to sanctify their union with a commingling of divine energies, and to assure that their life together will be long, fertile, prosperous, and undisturbed by harmful superhuman influences.

Standing before the fire that is the visual focus of the ceremony, the groom clasps the bride's hand and says, "I seize thy hand ...that thou mayest live to old age with me, thy husband." The bride places her foot on a stone to symbolize the firmness of her resolve. The ends of their flowing garments are knotted together, and they then enter into the ceremony's climactic and binding act: walking arm in arm three times around the sacred fire, each time in seven steps. The groom then touches the bride over the heart, saying, "Into my heart will I take thy heart; thy mind shall dwell in my mind." He paints on her forehead the vermillion cosmetic mark of a married Hindu woman. To symbolize their union, they eat a common meal while sitting together, though such commensal eating will not be their general practice as husband and wife. On the evening of their wedding day the two go out under the sky and look up together at the unchanging Pole Star, their model in a marriage that is indissoluble.

When in a home a mature person has died, an observance follows that is called aurdhvadaihika, the rite of the translated body. Within a few hours a procession of hurriedly summoned relatives and friends starts to move toward the local cremation site, led by the eldest son of the deceased as the chief mourner. The body is carried on a litter. The sorrowing marchers cry out the name of the god Rama or sometimes the name Hari (Visnu). At the cremation ground, the body is laid on a pyre of wood constructed according to strict rules. The son then performs the difficult duty of setting the pyre aflame with a firebrand that has usually been carried from home. He prays, "O Fire, when the body has been burnt, convey the spirit to its ancestors." The mourners return in a group toward their homes, without looking back, and they bathe in their clothing before entering any dwelling.

The last of the family rites are the *sraddhas,* postmortem ceremonies performed at home to honor and benefit the deceased. For the refreshment of departed parents, balls of rice and libations

of water are offered and accompanied by the recitation of texts expressing respect and concern. Such ritual offerings are made monthly for a year. Annually thereafter on the anniversary of the death, the parent and all remoter ancestors whose mames are remembered are bonored in sraddha rites. The sraddhas support in Hindus a continuing sense that a host of unseen witnesses observes their behavior and follows their fortunes with deep concern.

Rites, Rituals and Observances

Religion is the pathway of realization and fulfilment. Religious practices, rituals, rites, customs and ceremonies are aids to the awakening and unfoldment of latent spirituality in man. They help on the path of spiritual growth and evolution, and gradually the grosser ones give place to higher and subtler ones. Ritual and rights have rightly been termed as the "kindergarten" of religious and spiritual education and learning. There are classes and grades as there are in other branches of knowledge and learning; lower grades followed by the higher and the higher by still higher ones till one realizes the Self and attains final liberation or moksha. They are inevitable, and form the first steps leading to the heights of perfection and supreme fulfilment.

God is infinite knowledge, infinite wisdom, love, virtue, compassion and grace, but he cannot be comprehended in all his fulness at once, because of human limitations. We cannot pour an ocean into a cup. Gradually the vessel is enlarged and expanded, and is capable to receive of him more and more. What happened to Arjuna when Lord Krishna showed himself in his Cosmic Form at former's request. Arjuna was over-awed, bewilered, confused and terrified. He prayed Krishna to return to his former form and shape. So, it is step by step; higher practices must be preceded by the lower ones. Only the successful completion of lower grades can lead one to higher grades. Different religious practices mark the different phases of religious growth. They evolved with the evolution in human understanding of God. That is why there are rites, rituals, customs, celebrations, ceremonies, observances, idols and worship in Hinduism to suit the different tempraments, capacities and inclinations. The choice is vast and varied. One can

choose according to one's capacity, aptitude and standard. But all practices aim at taking an aspirant towards truth from untruth, towards immortality from death, and towards light of discrimination and knowledge from the darkness of ignorance. Rites and rituals are in the beginning, of ignorance. Rites and rituals are in the beginning, when man does not know God so intimately. They form a sort of ladder, a bridge between him and God. When he has attained God, his goal, there is no ladder, no bridge; gradually they drop off themselves. There are rungs in the ladder. These may be identified as worship, concentration, upasana, meditation, samadhi, etc. What is gross, manifest, extrovert and physical in the begining gradually becomes mental, subtle, introvert and witnout adjuncts.

Hinduism begins with the familiar, easier and concrete things, for one cannot jump to the ultimate realization without passing through the various stages of progress. It makes allowance for difference in mental make up. Spiritual growth, abilities, skills and aptitudes, every act, each observance, however gross, routine and extrovert, contribute its mite in the gradual awakening of the spirit within. They are basically religious, psychological and intimately connected with man's evolution in moral and spiritual terms. For example, a Hindu festival, cathartic in nature, is characterized by fasting, purification, worship, austerity, vigil, vows, offerings and worship of gods and acts of piety. Hindu festivals are a living example of finding joy through renunciation and self-denial. They are an exploration in the enjoyment of things without being bound or obsessed by them. There are many ways of fulfilment and spiritual evolution. Spiritual powers can be awakened and developed even by external observances at least in the developed even by external observances at least in the initial stages. As such, they form the best of austerity and spirituality for the masses. Lord Krishna in the Gita has said, "I am the ritual, I am the sacrifice, the oblation, and the herb. The all-inclusive Hindu view of immanence finds God and the universe identical and observes religious practices accordingly.

Rites, rituals and celebrations are in the blood of man, and the Hindus are more so because mother Nature has been so rich,

generous, beautiful and fantastic here as nowhere else. Man in essence is a celebrating man. With the advancement on the path of spirit and religion, his rituals and celebrations tend to become more sober, inward, mental and subtle and ultimately many of them fall off naturally. Puja and prayer give him a sense of participation in oneness of life, a sense of cosmic fellowship. With prayer, meditation and such other practices dawns an awareness of being in the presence of God. They are repetitive and observed daily, nay many times in 24 hours. All things that occur again and again in a rhythmic cycle deserve our utmost care and reverence for they are the essence of existence. It is this sense that early Aryans, and the Hindu masses even today are ritualistic and celebration oriented.

Rituals and ceremonies, as instruments, help in seeking God's grace and purification of the heart. The early Vedic religion was ritualistic, which aimed at attainment of heaven after death and happiness, peace and prosperity here in this life. There were many types of fire-sacrifices to suit every occasion, and they formed an essential part of daily and routine religious observances. Then the emphasis was on karma than on jnana or knowledge. The conception of final liberation or moksha was not known then. But gradually the influence of the Upanishads made the new ideal of moksha replace the old one of heaven, which meant not merely absence of suffering but presence of abundant happiness and pleasures in the abode of gods. Though rituals serve a limited purpose of attaining material well-being, physical health and happiness, but they cannot be dispensed with completely. One type of ritual is replaced by another. The vedic yajana or sacrifice was replaced by puja or worship of the personal deities in the homes and temples, and it gave rise to elaborate and wonderful sculpture and temple architecture. The Purva Mimamsa later on revived the Vedic ritualism. Mimamsa, which literally means investigation or enquiry is based on the Brahmana portion of the Vedas. It dealt with various aspects of ritual, as a means of attaining some specific benefit or avoidance of some particular harm. In later times the findings of Jaimini's Purva Mimamsa were systematised and further elaborated in the Kalpa Sutras, which served as "a kind of grammar of the Vedic Ceremonial". The Kalpa Sutras along with

Grihya Sutras revived and continued the Vedic tradition of ritualistic observances.

The Sacrifice

The Vedic man performed agnihotra daily, and periodically other sacrifices in order to propitiate gods to secure wealth, cattle, progeny and the like here and the heavenly existence hereafter. It was an activity through which he sought self-fulfilment and preservance of the universe. He know that the universe owed its origin to the divine sacrifice. It was the chief means of two-way relationship of man with gods and the Supreme Being. Religion is essentially a sacrifice, a puja and a prayer. It is a boundaries of space and time. It is the pathway to immortality and the conquest of death.

Man becomes a god and immortal through sacrifice. Man's whole life is a sacrifice. The yajana or agnihotra is the outer reflection of the sacrifice that is taking place inside him. And it is the real sacrifice. In the 16 to 18 sections of the Chandoygopanish the full span of life is beautifully contemplated as a sacrifice. "Man, in truth, is himself a sacrifice. His first twenty-four years correspond to the morning libation...His next forty-four years correspond to the midday libation. His next forty-eight years correspond to the third libation...When a man feels hunger and thirst when he does not rejoice, then he is undergoing his initiation rite. When he eats and drinks and rejoices, then he is joining the upasada rituals. When he laughs and eats and has sexual intercourse, then he is taking part in chant and recitation. Asceticism, alms-giving, moral integrity, non-violence, truthfulness—these are the gifts of the priests.

Therefore, one says, "He will procreate, he has procreated," for this is his new birth. His death is the ablution after the ceremony. Ghora Angirasa, having told all this to Krishna, the son of Devaki added, "when man is free fram desire, in his last hour, he should take refuge in the three following:

You are imperishable
You are immovable
You are firm in the breath of life."

This kind of ritualistic and sacrificial conception of life is found in a few other Upanishads also. In the Vedas the sacrifice, as an act that forms an immediate bridge between the doer and his fulfilment, and as an act of creation, has been extolled every now and then :

"They who could not ascend the ship of sacrifice, sink down in desolation, trembling with alarm.

When Gods prepared the sacrifice with
Purusha as their offering,
Its oil was spring, the holy gift was autumn summer was the wood.
They balmed as victim on the grass
Purusha born in earliest time
With him the deities and all Sadhyas and Rishis sacrificed.
From that great general sacrifice
the dripping fat was gathered up.
He formed the creatures of the air,
and animals both wild and tame".

—The Rigveda, XLV 6 and XCI, 6-8.

"May life succeed through sacrifice.

May life-breath thrive by sacrifice.

May the eye thrive by sacrifice.

May the back thrive by sacrifice.

May sacrifice thrive by sacrifice."

—The Yajurveda, IX, 21.

In the Bhagvad Gita this is in the form of renunciation of fruits of action. Every work becomes a sacrifice when performed without attachment and desire of fruits. The renunciation of the fruits that may result from an action is surrendered at the feet of the Lord. Detached and disinterested actions are desirable both for individual progress on the path of spirituality and the welfare of others. A desireless work becomes a sacrifice, a work of love and establishes link between the doer and the God. Thus, each and every work is a ritural, a prayer if done out of love of the humanity and without

selfish motives.

"Worship the gods with sacrifice,
and they will nourish you in their turn.
Thus nourishing one another
You shall reap the highest good.

Cherished by your sacrifice, the gods
shall grant you your desires.
A thief verily is he who enjoys their boons
without giving anything in return.

Longing for success on earth they sacrifice to the gods,
for quickly success is born
from sacrifice in this world of man.
Of one unattached and liberated,
with mind absorbed in knowledge,
his actions become a sacrifice,
his entire actions melt away.
Brahman is all, the clarifed butter,
the offerer and the fire.
Unto Brahman verily he goes
who contemplates on Brahman alone
in all his actions."

—The Bhagvad Gita, III, 11-12; IV, 23-24.

Samskaras

The Hindu Samskaras or sacraments are the prescribed rites and rituals signifying the outward expression of the inner spiritual refinement growth and grace. They are part and parcel of popular Hinduism and are observed to guard against the evil influences and to obtain spiritual grace through the propitiation of various deities. They are social and cultural occasions when man can give expression to his joyous and felicitious feelings and even sad sentiments. As a very useful means, they provide the physical and spiritual refinement to the practitioner. Thus, they become the first steps leading to spiritual evolution and perfection. They represent the Hindu beliefs in regard to man's relation with gods and the Supreme Being. The sacred fire, oblations, invocation, purification,

prayer, worship, charity, blessings, festivity and sharing with the relatives and friends are the salient characterstics of a Hindu sacrament. Very comprehensive in nature, these ceremonies create a spiritual, social and cultural atmosphere, very conducive to the all round development of an individual and the society as a whole. It is a series of observances and rituals which begins right with the conception and goes through the birth, initiation and marriage to the funeral rites. Their symbolical, psychological and practical significance is great and obvious. The Grihya Sutras contain all these sacraments and give necessary directions in regard to their observance.

Childhood Sacraments

Man is the hero in the drama of life. He occupies the central place in the scheme of creation. God creates, but it is man who understands and appreciates it. The birth of a baby, emergence of a new spark of consciousness, is an important event. Every being is sacred and mysterious, but man is the most sacred, for he is the most intelligible being. To become a parent is to acquire the stature of a creator. It means continuty of life, of traditions and wisdom and religious practices. To be a father or a mother is an inborn sacred desire, a religious duty. It is a kind of paying off one's debt to the forefathers. That is why right from the conception onwards through various stages of birth and development of a baby, there are prayers, observances and religious practices. Procreation is a fulfilment which imparts meaning to life. In the following hymn the sacredness of the act of procreation is proclaimed in glowing terms:

"Woman in truth is Fire, O Gautama, the phallus is the fuel, the hair the smoke, the vulva the flame, penetration the coal, the pleasure the sparks. In this Fire the gods offer semen. From that offering arises a person. He lives as long as he lives. When he dies, they carry him to the fire. Here his fire becomes Fire, his fuel fuel, his smoke smoke, his flame flame, his coals coals, his sparks sparks. In this fire the gods offer a person. From that offering arises the person resplendent as Light."

—The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, VI, 13-14.

Conception, birth, iraitiation marriage, etc., are important religious, social and cultural occasions, when certain rites and rituals are observed among the Hindus. In the Atharvaveda there are many charms and prayers in regard to successful conception of a male child, prevention of miscarriage, delivery and the safety of both the mother and baby:

"Unot thy womb let a foetus come, a male one, as an arrow to a quiver; let a hero he born unto thee here, a ten month's son.

"And what excellent seeds the bulls generate; with them do thou acquire a son; become thou a productive milch-cow.

"As this great earth receives the embryo of existence, so let thine embryo be maintained, in order to birth after pregnancy."

—The Atharvaveda, III, 23, & VI, 17.

During the period of confinement and till the eleventh day after the birth of a child, when purification ceremony is held, the mother remains defiled and unclean. Then wife and husband together perform puja and samkalpa. They sip consecrated water and are purified. This water is also poured over the heads of the infant's parents. This ceremony, known as jataka-karma, removes all defilement and the mother and the house become clean and pure. The purohita who presides over the sacrament is given gifts of money, grains and sweets at the end of the ceremony.

Then follows, on the twelfth day, the Namkarana sacrament or name-giving ceremony. A name is an important and a sacred thing. A Hindu child is often named after a deity, a saint, a holy thing or an auspicious object. The qualities of a particular god or person are supposed to influence the personality of the child so named. More often than not, a Hindu child is given more than one names. In the Grihya Sutras detailed directions are given about naming a child. It is emphasized that a name should be pleasing, auspicious, easily understood in its meaning and according to the family traditions. Namakarana samskar marks the ever increasing horizon of a child's activities. On this auspicious occasion all the near and dear relatives and friends are invited, and after purification rites, the fire sacrifice is observed and oblations are effered to various gods

including the nine planets. The father performs the samkalpa and then the child is given a name according to the day, hour, moment and the planet and constellation under which the child is born. The child is brought out in the open courtyard and made to look at the sun by the father. Prayers are offered to ensure the long life of the child. In the end presents are given to the purohita and the guests.

Annaprasana samskar is the occasion when the newborn child is given solid food for the first time after weaning. It underlines the physical need of the child. Food is a sacred thing. It is the source of all life and existence. Food is Brahman himself. Sacrifice is the food of gods. It bestows vitality and strength both physical and spiritual. On this day sacramental food is prepared amidst chanting of various hymns and given to the child. It is performed when the child has attained the age of six months. The gathering sit down to a sumptuous feast after the fire-sacrifice and feeding of the child. The woman folk sing songs and do arti of the child on this occasion.

Chudakarana (tonsure) or hair-cutting ceremony is another important sacrament. It is supposed to give long life and happiness to the child. The shaving of the head, the cutting of hair and pairing of nails remove impurities and bestows happiness, health and beauty. It is done either when the child is one year or three years old. The child is anointed with oil and than bathed in warm water by the married women. They it is adorned with ornaments. The purohita performs puja and sacrifice and the child is made to sit on a piece of consecrated ground in a red square drawn by the priest. Then the barber shaves the the boy's head, leaving the tuft of a hair on the top. This tuft of hair or shikha became a universal symbol of Hinduism. The women sing songs to the accompaniment of musical instruments and perform arti of the child. A prayer recited for the long life and health of the child on this occasion is as under:

"For just thee, O old age, let this boy grow, let not the other deaths, that are a hundred, harm him; as a forgetful mother in her lap a son, let Mitra protect him from distress that comes from a friend".

"Let Mitra or helpful Varuna, in concord make him one that dies of old age; so Agni he offerer, knowing the ways, bespeaks all the

births of the gods."

"Thou art master of earthly cattle, that are born, or also that are to be born, let not breath leave this one, nor expiration, let not friends slay this one, nor enemies".

"Let father heaven, let mother earth, in concord make the one that dies of old age; that thou mayest live in the lap of Aditi, guarded by breath and expiration, a hundred winters".

"This one, O Agni, do thou lead for life-time, for splendour, to dear seed, O Varuna, Mitra, king like a mother, O Aditi, yield him refuge; O all ye gods, that he be reaching old age".

—The Atharvaveda, II, 28.

Upanayana

Upanayana sacrament or investiture ceremony is a very important event in the life of a Hindu boy. It follows the akshrarambha samskar, when a child is taught alphabets on some auspicious day when the sun is in the northern hemisphere. Alphabets, the source of writing and knowledge, are held sacred. This ceremony is held between fifth to seventh year of the child.

Upanayana, the most important sacrament, marks the next stage after akshrarambha. It initiates the recipient into and active life. On this occasion the boy is given the sacred triple cord to wear, and then his life as a Brahmchari begins. It marks the beginning of the first stage of life, when the boy acquires knowledge and learning under a competent guru and prepares himself for the second stage called Grihastha. The ceremony takes three days, and the teacher accepts the boy as his pupil to impart him a new birth and the pupil becomes a dvija, the twice-born. The first birth is physical and this one is spiritual, signifying the unfoldment of his mind and spirit.

Upanayana represents the ancient Hindu ideal of strict continence. During this period the aspirant studies scriptures and observes strict celibacy under his guru. This is the foundation of all other three. ashramas, namely, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. It aims at the student's all round development, the physical, the mental, the moral and the spiritual. It is a kind of transformation which helps in

the realization of the Self. Without it a Brahman boy is deprived of his privileged status and becomes an outcast.

After ablutions and purification rites, the sacrament begins on a auspicious day and hour fixed by the priest. After shaving the head, the boy is made to sit, on a dias facing east. The priest then offers him a new garment, symbolizing the beginning of a new life, raciting, "May the Goddess who spun, who wove, who measured and fashioned this garment, clothe you with long life! Put on this garment, endowed with life and strength". The teacher then ties a girdle of sacred darbha grass, symbolizing the spirit of austerity and penance, round the boy's body saying, "Here is this blessed girdle, friendly Goddess for our defence against evil words and the purification of our family, investing us with strength by inhalation and exhalation". Then the teacher offers his new pupil the deer skin and the staff reciting appropriate verses from the scriptures. Then touching his pupil's heart with upturned palm he recites a prayer for the former's well being and happiness. The touching of the heart symbolizes the mental and spiritual harmony and communion between the two. Thus, a new life begins for the boy and he becomes a upanita, one initiated into a life of perfect discipline.

After the completion of the studies in a Gurukula, the student returns to his home and takes a ritual bath. This marks the end of Brahmacharya and student life, and begining of a new phase, when he is ready to enter marriage and plunge into worldly life of a Grihastha.

Marriage

Vivaha or marriage is central to all domestic and social activities. A quarter of one's life is spent as a Grihastha in the attainment of the ideals of dharma. artha and kama. A wife is the main source of these ideals. Wife and husband are complementary to each other, and therefore, marriage is a sacrament which leads towards the unity and integration of the two persons of opposite sexes. Without marriage one is incomplete and unfulfilled. Marriage is the corner-stone of human relationships.

The marriage ceromony has many stages. The selection of the husband and wife is the first stage. Generally the couple belongs to the same caste, but now a marriage outside one's own cast can also be seen. In the selection of a bride and a bridegroom their family, age, physical features, education, social status, etc., are taken into consideration and horoscopes of would be life-partners are matched. Marriage preliminary consists in betrothal or engagement. During this stage the bride and bridegoom are examined, terms of marriage are settled and formal acceptance is given. The marriage proper consists of kanya dana, marriage sacrifice and saptapadi. The bride is gifted to the bridegroom, and the latter then takes the bride's hand into his own, homa is performed and then they together walk round the sacrificial fire seven times. Mounting a stone symbolizing constancy and stability, looking at the sun as a witness, and at the Pole star, representing steadfastness, are other observances of the ceremony. Marriage is sacred and so indissoluble. Hindu marriages are generally arranged ones.

The marriage of the Sun-maiden Surya with Soma, the Moon described at length in the Rigveda is the model of Hindu marriage. Thes verses relate the marriage ceremony in general and especially the wedding of Surya, the daughter of the Sun. The later parts of the hymn quoted below describe the rites of handing over of the bride to the bridegroom as a gift, the samkalpa, clasping of the hands, taking of the bride home, and the symbolic circumambulation of the Agni, the universal witness:

"Soma was he who wooed the maid;
the groomsmen wire both Ashvins, when the Sun-god Savitar bestowed his willing Surya on her Lord!

Her spirit was the bridal car; the covering
therefor was heaven. Bright were both Steers
that drew it when Surya approached
her husband's home.

Let Pushan take thy hand and hence
conduct thee; may the two Ashvins on
their car transport thee. Go to the house
to be the household's mistress, and

speak as lady to thy gathered people.

I take thy hand in mine for happy
fortune that thou mayest reach old age
with me, thy husband...

O Pushan, send her on as most auspicious
her who shall be the sharer of my pleasures,

Her who shall twine her loving arms
about me, and welcome all my love and mine embraces.

O Bounteous Indra, make this bride blast
in her sons and fortunate.
Vouchsafe to her ten sons, and make
her husband the eleventh man.

So may the Universal Gods, so may the
Waters join our hearts.
May Matrisvan, Dhatar, and Deshtri
together bind us close.

—The Rigveda, X, 85.

The samkalpa and kanyadana ceremony in regard to Sita's marriage with Rama is described by Valmiki in his famous epic poem Ramayana:

"Thereupon, leading forward Sita, who was adorned with all ornaments, and placing her before the fire, facing Raghava, the King Janaka said to the darling of Kaushalya's heart, 'This Sita, my daughter, will be your partner in the Dharmic life. Receive her, may all good attend you! take her by the hand. Devoted to her lord, she will be fortunate, always following you like a shadow'. So saying, the king poured into Rama's hand water sanctified by mantras, as the gods and the rishis applauded saying, 'Excellent, excellent!' The celestial kettledrums sounded, and there was a great shower of flowers."

Thus, Hindu marriage is sacrament performed for social and individual fulfilment, continuity of race and customs. It is a religious institution, a sacrifice, a fusion of the parts into a whole. Man and woman represent the Purusha and Prakriti, the cosmic

palarities. It is their fusion and integration which sets the wheel of creation in motion. Neither man nor woman is complete. As persons and individuals, they are merely halves.

Funeral Rites

Rites and rituals are natural to man. He cannot dispense with them. They are there in life, and after death too, performed for the departed by the survivors. The Hindus consecrate their lives through various samskars or sacraments. They believe in the reincarnation and the other world of the dead. The funeral rites are important for they pave the peaceful passage to the another world for the departed soul. Agni is the envoy to the gods and carries oblations. That is why the Hindus dispose their dead bodies by cremating. Cremation is kind of sacrifice. The Hindus view the whole life as a sacrifice, and cremation as the last sacrificial act in an individual's existence. Thus, rites can be termed as man's manifestation of his deep religious desire to propitiate the gods.

It is customary to remove the dying person from the bed and place it on the earth. Ganga-water and tulsi (basil) leaves are put in the mouth of the dying, and a cow and other things are given to Brahmans in charity. The dead body is then placed on a bier and covered with a fine shroud, and carried to the cremation ground by the nearest relatives and friends. The chief mourner, generally the eldest son of the deceased, leads the funeral procession. The ladies are not allowed to accompany the bier to the cremation ground. On the way to the cremation ground three halts are made. The dead body is then finally bathed and placed on the pyre. The chief mourner applies a burning torch to the pyre with the chanting of mantras, "Burn him not up, nor quite consume him Agni; let not his body or his skin be scattered. O Jatavedas, when thou hast matured him, then send him on his way unto the fathers...The sun receive thine eye the wind they spirit; go, as thy merit is, to earth or heaven. Go, if it be thy lot, unto the waters; go make thine home in plants with all thy members." (Rigveda, X, 16, 1 & 3).

After the body has been half consumed its head is split open with a bamboo pole by the chief mourner, and when the corpse has been consumed, to a great extent, the people walk round the pyre three

times and go to the nearby pond, river or well for bathing to purify themselves. Then they go to the deceased's house and return from the gate to their respective homes. On the third day the ashes are collected for immersion into sacred waters and the kites fed. An earthen pitcher, filled with water, is tied to a peepal tree. The bones of the deceased are taken to the banks of the river Ganges and immersed there. The Kriya ceremony marks the end of the period of mourning, when all friends and relations collect and worship is offered to the deities. The Kriya ceremony marks the end of the period of mourning, when all friends and relations collect and worship is offered to the deities. The priests are given gifts and the assembled people a feast. During the Kriya ceremony it is customary for the pundit or the purohit to console the mourners by dwelling upon the transistory nature of life and immortality of the soul. Texts from scriptures like the Gita, Garuda Purana, Kathopanishad, etc. are recited underlining the idea that death is not the end of life and existence. Death is inevitable and universal, it is a change and transformation, a door through which all the beings pass from birth to birth. Change and continuity or transformation and transmission are the two aspects of the same reality.

Festivals and Fasts

Hindu festivals and ritual observance are essentially religious, and a great source of spiritual and moral advancement. Like the deities of the Hindu pantheon, fasts and festivals are numerous and frequent. Sometimes they outnumber the days of the week. There are more festivals than there are days in a week. A Hindu festival consists of purification, prayers, worship, fasts, vows and other acts of piety. Being cathartic in nature, the Hindu festival consists of purification, prayers, worship, fasts, vows and other acts of piety. Being cathartic in nature, the Hindu festivals purify and strengthen the spirit within. They teach how to find joy through renunciation and self-denial. They are an exploration in the enjoyment of sense-objects without being bound and obsessed by them.

A fast as a religious vow and observance is the best form of austerity for the masses and householders, which helps in

developing the spiritual side of the aspirant. It has been a time-honoured religious practice since hoary past. A fast or a festival, accompanied by prayer, acts of charity, contemplation, etc., becomes a convenient means of spiritual growth, purification and self-control. They help people in striking a golden mean between penance and pleasure. The Hindus are famous for turning every possible opportunity into an observance of rituals, fasts, prayers, and terminating it with a feast and festivity. The Hindu festivals and fasts have their roots in very old ideals and traditions, and underline India's cultural affinity, emotional integration, common ethos, points of contact and bonds of unity in diversity. We give below a few representative festivals and religious observances.

Buddha Purnima

Lord Buddha, the Enlightened and Perfect One was born in Hindu Kshatriya caste of the Sakya clan in Lumbini Gardens in 563 B.C. He left home and renounced the world in search of the Reality at the age of 29, and attained enlightenment after 6 years, when he was 35 years old. He passed away and attained moskha at the age of 80 at Kushinagar, in the country of Mallas. Tathagata, the foremost of the spiritual luminaries was born, attained enlightenment and niravan on the very same day of Vaisakh Purnima, the Full Moon day (of April-May). It was again on the Full Moon day of July that he set in motion the Wheel of Dharma and preached the first sermon to his five fellow ascetics, who had fied him when he gave up austerities seeing their futility. He taught them the Dharma in the Deer Park of Sarnath in Varanasi, now a great centre of Buddhist pilgrimage and learning.

The association of the same day, that is, Vaisakh Purnima, with three great events of Buddha's life has made it the most important festival in the Buddhists world. Lord Buddha is regarded as the ninth incarnation of Vishnu, and so is held in great reverence by the Hindus. Buddha Purnima is celebrated all over the world with immense piety devotion and fervour. Special celebrations are held at places like Sarnath, Sanchi, Kushinagar and Bodh Gaya, where he had become the All-enlightened One. At Sanchi some of his

sacred remains are enshrined under a magnificent stupa. On this day of celebration. Buddha-images and portraits are taken out in a procession. Devotees of Buddha recite and read their holy scriptures, observe fast, worship Buddha at home and in temples and practice charity.

Budha's teachings, based on the Middle Path between the two extremes of sensuality and moriticiation, are more relevant today than they were even before. He taught the 'Four Noble Truths of suffering and its cause, desire or selfishness, of the removal of that cause and the Eightfold Path which leads to the end of suffering'. He preached that this world is full of sorrows because of attachment to sense-objects. Our sufferings are direct result of our desires and sense-attachments. This results into reincarnations and a ceaseless chain of rebirths, sufferings, sickness, old age and death. He declared that extinction of desires and attachment is essential for salvation, and the only way is to follow the Eight-fold Path: Right Belief, Right Intention, Right Word, Right Conduct, Right Living, Right Efforts, Right Thinking and Right Meditation. He underlined the importance of striking a judicious balance between indulgence and asceticism, and it is what most of us badly need toda. "Decay is inherent in all component things! Work out your own salvation with deligence", were Lord Buddha's last words to the Bhikkus, before he passed away and entered into Nirvana.

Katha Yatra

Ratha Yatra or Car Festival is one of the most important Hindu festivals. It is held in Ashadha (June-July) throughout the country, and car-processions of Shri Jagannath (Lord of the Universe) are taken out through the main markets and streets along with those of Lord Valabhadra and Devi Subhadra. But the main and most imposing festival is held at Puri in Orissa. Puri is well-known as Shri Kshetra or Jagannath Dham. It is one of the four most sacred Dhamas or places of pilgrimage. The other three most sacred Dhamas are at Badrinath in the Himalayas, Dwarka in Gujarat and Rameshwaram in Tamilnadu. Puri is also one of the ten famous Shakti Pithas. It is here that Sati's navel fell, when her corpse was

dismembered by the Sudarshana Chakra of Lord Vishnu. Here she is worshipped as Goddess Vimala and Shiva, her consort, as Lord Jagannath.

Thousands of devotees from all over the country and abroad collect at Puri to witness and participate in this most peectacular religious event. The twelfth century imposing Jagannath shrine, 60 kms. from Bhubaneshwar, is situated on Nilachala mountain. For a devout Hindu, a pillgrimage to Puri is a must and a life-long ambition. It is believed that a three days and nights sojourn at Puri will free a pilgrim from future cycle of births and deaths. Most of the year it is crowded with pilgrims, but on the occasion of Car Festival, Puri becomes an ocean of seething humanity. On this auspicious day Lord Jagannath is taken out in a grand procession, and on an enormous chariot, 45 feet high, 35 feet square, and supported on 16 wheels, 7 feet in diameter. The car is shown being drawn by four wooden horses and driven by the idol of Maruti. On the three sides of the chariot are the three wooden statues of Rama, Surya and Vishnu. The car is painted yellow and golden and is called 'Nandi- Ghosha'. The chariot of Lord Valabhadra has 14 wheels and is 44 feet higth. It is painted red and green and called 'Tala-Dhawaja'. The wooden statue of Satyaki is shown driving the chariot. There are wooden idols of Nrisimha and Rudra Devas, who arehis companions.

The third chariot of Devi-Subhadra is 43 feet high and has 12 wheels. Painted in black and red, it is called 'Darpa-Dalan'. The Pandava prince Ajuna's idol is shown driving this chariot. Then, there are idols of Vana Durga, Tara Devi and Chandi Devi on the three sides of the car. One day before the commencement of the festival, the 3 km. route is swept clean by the devotees with the brooms, symbolising the melting away of pride, vanity and conceit. The yatra commemorates Krishna's journey to Mathura from Gokula at Kansa's invitation. The chariot procession goes along the broad avenue to Gundicha Temple, the Lord's Summer Garden Retreat, where they stay for seven days and then are brought back to the main shrine. At the termination of the festival the chariots are broken up and used to manufacture religious relics. Every year new chariots are made. The deities themselves are made of wood and

renewed at certain intervals, when certain astronomical conditions are there. The wood selected for this purpose must also satisfy certain conditions.

The three huge idols of Jagannath, this brother Valbhadra and sister Subhadra are taken out of the Garbha-griha of the main temple and installed on the there respective chariots parked across the courtyard. Then the massive chariots are pulled with the four rows of the strong ropes by the thousands of devotees along the 3 km. route to Gundicha Temple. First Valbhadra's chariot is pulled along, then that of Devi Subhadra, and next the car of Lord Jagannath. In the evening the chariots reach their destination and then after puja and other rites, they are taken into the Gundicha Shrine. On the tenth day, the deities are drawn back in their chariots to the main temple.

An outstanding characteristic of Jagannath temple at Puri is that there is no cast distinction, and all are equal whether one happens to be a Brahman or a chandal or a shudra. The legend of the origin of Lord Jagannath is equally fantastic. Krishna was killed by a hunter named Jara in ignorance, and Krishna's body was left to rot under a tree, but some pious persons found his bones and placed them in a box. Later Vishnu directed a devout king Indradymuna in a dream to make an image of Jagannath and to place the bones of Krishna inside it. Vishwakarma, the architect of the gods was assigned the job of making the image. He agreed on the condition that he should be left undisturbed till the work was complete. A fortnight passed and the king grew impatient and entered the place, which made Vishwakarma angry, and he left the images unfinished. That is why the deities have neither hands nor feet. Indradyumna prayed to Brahma, who promised to make the impage famous. Brahma gave the images eyes and sould and also acted as the high priest of consecration.

The king of Puri, the descendant of king Anantavarman Chodaganga, the original founder of the temple, alone has the right to carry the Lord's umbrella and other paraphernalia, and it is he who sweeps the path before the chariots. Over 6,000 male adults are in the Lord's service, headed by the king. Some 20,000 people

are said in all to be dependent on the temple for their livelihood. The Jagannath temple is a kind of world itself. The festival is observed almost everywhere in the country where there is a temple dedicated to Jagannath.

Deepawali

India has the longest calendar for festivals and fasts in the world. All the Hindu festivals are rooted in myth, and myth is nothing else but a poetic form of history. Deepawali or the Festiveal of Lights is an important popular festival celebrated throughout the country in one form or the other. It falls on the last day of the dark half of Kartika (October-November). As a matter of fact it is a five-day festival, but the main celebrations are on Deepawali.

Dewali is associated with several legends. One myth says that on this auspicious day Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and good fortune, roams about and visits the houses of people, Therefore, people tidy up their homes, establishments and shops and decorate them lavishly to welcome the goddess. In the night she is worshipped with great devotion. It also commemorates the triumph of Lord Rama over Ravana, and Rama's return to Ayodhya. It is also on this day that Krishna killed the demon Narkasura.

A few days before the festival, the houses are white-washed and completely cleaned. The courtyards, the gates and the place of worship are decorated with bandarvars, flowers, intricate coloured paperwork and at night every nook and corner of the house, etc. is illuminated with earthen lampas, candles and freworks are displayed. People get up early in the morning and have bath and then move about freely in an atmosphere of gaiety, mirth, rejoicing and festivity. Lots of sweets are prepared and exchanged. On this occasion people ask for each other's forgiveness for the wrongs done knowingly or unknowingly, and mutual relations are re-established and strengthened, Thus, all enmity is forgiven and forgotten and people embrace one another. At night Lakshmi, along with Ganesha is worshipped, old accounts are closed and new ones are opened. People in throngs go about the bazars and streets during the night and appreciate the finest illumination. Special shops and bazars are also set up on this occasion, and there is a

brisk buying of sweets, utensils, clothes, jewellery, toys, etc.

Diwali also marks the advent of new season and the sowing of new crops. On this day begins the new Vikrama Era and new account books are opened. The famous king Vikramaditya, after whose name the era is, was crowned on this day. People greet each other and distribute sweets. In Bengal Kali is worshipped with great fervour on this day. The Jains celebrate Diwali as a day of final liberation and moksha of Lord Mahavira. Similarly Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, attained salvation on this day. The great Swami Ramaj Tirtha also entered his final jal-samadhi on this tithi. At great Jaina shrines like that of Pavapuri in Bihar, and Girnar in Gujarat, special puja festivals are held, sacred scriptures read and recited and Lord Mahavira worshipped. Thus, this great festival of lights symbolises man's urge to move towards light of truth from darkness of ignorance and unhappiness.

Ramanavami

Ramnavami or the birthday of Lord Rama is a major Hindu festival celebrated all over the country by devout Hindus both Vaishnavas and Shaivas. Rama the seventh incarnation of Vishnu was born on the ninth day of the bright half of the Chaitra (March-April) in Ayodhya, in the Treta Yuga, the Second Age. There is one God, desireless, formless, uncreated, True Being, Consciousness and Bliss, the supreme spirit, the all pervading, whose shadow is the sorld; who incarnates himself as Rama or Krishna and does many things, only for the love that he bears to his devotees; who in his mercy ever refrains from anger against those whom he loves and knows to be his own. Adi Kavi Balmiki in his celebrated Ramayana describes the advent of Rama thus:

"Then after the oxpiry of six seasons and on the completion of the twelfth month, on the ninth lunar day of the month of Chaitra under the star Punarvastu with the Sun, Mars, Saturn, Jupiter and Venus at Aries, Capricorn, Libra, Cancer and Pisces, and when the Moon with Jupiter entered Cancer of the Zodiac, Kaushalya gave birth to great and prosperous Rama with mighty arms, rosy eyes and scarlet lips, the joy of Dashratha and the adored of all people He bore all

auspicious marks on his fair body."

The Ramayana means the "Ways of Rama". It is held in the greatest possible reverence because it embodies the best of human ideals and a living sum of Indian character. As popular religious epic and great literary work nothing can inspire and enthuse is more than the Ramayana. A verse in the end of Ramacharita Manas reads:

"There is no age to compare the Age of Iron (Kaliyuga); in it, if a man has only faith and devotes himself to praising Ram's spotless virtues, he can escapes from the sea of birth and death without further trouble. Religion has been revealed with four feet; in the Iron Age one is of the most importance to whomsoever God has given let him practice alms giving and prosper"

A fair idea of Ramayana's immense popularity can be had from the fact that there are about 350 versions of it in Hindi alone, and the name of Rama, as Rama! Rama!' or 'Jai Ramji Ki!', is a common form of salutation among the masses.

The Ramanavami festival offers to us all an opportunity to imbibe at least some of the ideals and spirit enshrined in the ways of Rama. On this great day Lord Rama is prayed to and worshipped, and it is the surest means to be able to follow in his ideals. One who approaches his lotus feet with love, devotion and humility becomes noble, large hearted, pious, peaceful, master of senses and beloved of the wise. On this sacred day you should observe fast and practice charities. You should visit a temple of Rama early in the morning after bath, etc. You can also make a small shrine at home and install a picture of Sri Rama- Panchayatan in it and offer prayers and puja.

In Ayodhya, the birth place of Sri Rama, great celebrations are there; the temples are decorated, Ramayana is read and recited and a grand fair is held. At other places also icons of Rama, along with Sita and Hanuman is richly adorned and worshipped and other acts of devotion and piety are observed. Chanting of the holy name of Rama, Sankirtanas and holding of lectures and discourses of Rama's life and teachings, for the benefit of the audience, are a

common feature of the celebrations. People take vow to devote themselves more to their spiritual and moral evolution on this occasion. Realy, Ramnam is a great magic formula (mantra) and a wish-fulfilling tree (*Kalpa Vriksha*), and must be repeated, recited and meditated upon every now and then. Tulsidas has said that place the name of Rama on your tongue, like a jewelled lamp on the threshold of the door, and there will be light, as you will, both inside and out.

Ramanavami is also celebrated as the Vasanta Navratra and the celebration starts from the first lunar day of the bright fortnight of Chaitra and lasts upto Ramanavami. On Ashtami Durga is worshipped. A fast is observed all the nine days and Durga- saptsati is read and an earthen pitcher filled with water is installed. Some fast only on the first and the last day of the period. Rama and Lakshmana had also performed worship to mother Durga before killing Ravana. If you wish to achieve anything worthwhile, seek the Mother's grace and it is a proper occasion. Ram and Devi, both symbolize the victory of good over the evil.

Ganesh Chaturthi

Ganesh or Vinayak Chaturthi is one of the most popular Hindu festivals, celebrated all over the land, as a birthday of Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed God, on the fourth day of the bright half of Bhadra (August-September). The clay moulded figures of Lord Ganesha are worshipped during this festival and then immersed into the sea, river, pool or some other such water. Ganesha, is the God of wisdom, learning, prudence, success and power. His names are repeated in the beginning of every thing. As Vighnesha or the remover of the obstacles, he is propitiated at the start of every activity, whether it be a journey, marriage, initiation, house construction, the writing of a book or even that of a letter.

He is a great scribe and learned in the religious lare and scriptures. It was Ganesha, who at the dictation of the seer Vyasa, wrote the Mahabharata. He is also the Lord of Ganas, the Shiva's hosts. He bears a single tusk (ek-danta) and holds in his four hands a shell, a discus, a goad and a lotus and is always accompanied by his mount, the rat. Ganesha is a great lover of sweets and fruits. He is

also the presiding deity of Muladhara Chakra (plexus) or the psychic centre in the human body where the Kundalini Shakti resides.

There are two very interesting myths about his birth and how he come to possess the head of an elephant. One myth relates that disliking Lord Shiva's surprise visits during her baths, Parvati formed her scurf into a man's figure and gave it life. Then, she placed Ganesha to guard her bath-house entrance. Shiva came and tried to enter but when he found his way barred he cut off his head. It greatly angered Parvati and so ultimately Shiva had to send someone to fatch another head for Ganesha. The first creature found by him was an elephant, Its head was brought and planted on Ganesha's shoulders.

Another version says that Parvati was blessed with a beautiful son. All the gods assembled to see and admire the son of Shiva- Parvati. They all gazed at the child except Shani, because he was under a curse, which caused any being he looked at to be burnt to ashes. Parvati insisted that Shani also looked at and admired her son. No sooner, did Shani do so than Ganesha's head was burnt to ashes. Parvati cursed Shani for having killed his son, but Brahma intervened and comforting told her that if the first available head were planted on her son's shoulders, he would be alive again. So Vishnu set forth on Garuda and the first creature he found was an elephant sleeping beside ariver. He cut off its head and was fixed on Gane sha's trunk.

Similarly there is another interesting story which relates why he has only one tusk. On Ganesh Chaturthi, the images of Ganesha are worshipped with sweet balls (laddoos or modakas), water, new raiments, incense flowers, scent, betel leaf and naivaidyas (food offerings). His mantra is repeated, he is meditated upon and worshipped and the naivaidya distributed as Prasad. Brahmins are fed and given gifts. In Maharashtra this festival is observed with great religious fervour, pomp, gaiety and eclat and Ganesha idols are taken out in grand processions before immersion into the sea, and even otherwise Ganesha is a very popular deity and worshipped daily and invariably in the beginning of every

auspicious work. The prayers offered to him are many, but below is given one which is very popular:

Victory to Ganesha, Victory to Ganesha, Victory to Ganesha, the Lord,
whose mother is Parvati, and father Mahadeva.
We offer Him the garlands of flowers and fruits.
We offer Him the sweetmeat of ladoos, and the saints their services.

Four-armed, and one-tusked, He is gracious.
Astride a mouse, His forehead is adorned with sindoor.
He bestows sight upon the blind and cure to the leaper.
To the barren He give sons and riches to the poor.
We offer Him sweets and ladoos, and the sages their services.

Our offerings of flowers, gardlands and fruits to Him.
Be gracious to the poor, O scion of Shambhu,
fulfil our heart- felt
wishes.
We chant this laud.

Janmashtami

On the eighth day of the black half of Bhadra (August-September) was born Shri Krishna, the eighth Avtar or incarnation of Vishnu. Therefore, this day is well-known as Janmashtami or Krishna-Janmashtami. This auspicious day of birth of Krishna, the direct manifestation of Vishnu himself, is celebrated in all parts of India with eclat and great enthusiasm. In the Bhagvad Gita Krishna declares: "All this Universe has been created by me; all things exist in me", and Arjuna addresses him as "the supreme universal spirit, the supreme dwelling, the eternal person, divine prior to the Gods, unborn omnipresent". His life is celebrated in great detail in the Puranas like Harvamsha and Shrimad Bhagvatam. The circumstances in which he was born were quite peculiar and mysterious. He incarnated himself primarily to destroy evil and wickedness and to establish Dharma.

The demon King Kansa was a great and dreaded tyrant, but he loved his sister Devaki, and at her marriage with Vasudeva, he, out

of great affection, drove their marriage chariot. Then, all of a sudden an orcale told him that eighth born of Devaki shall be the cause of his doom and death. At this he would have killed her then and there, but for the intervention of Vasudeva and their promise to give him over each and every child born to them. They kept their promise, and Kansa killed all of their seven children one after the other to a great suffering and grief of the couple. They were kept in the prison under strict watch and in chains and locks.

So Krishna was born as their eighth son in the prison cell. But it so happened, with divine grace, that the guards fell asleep, their chains loosened and locks and the gates of the prison cell opened. Vasudeva took the child Krishna to Nanda's house in Gokula and exchanged him for a baby girl born there to Yashoda. When Kansa heard of the birth of girl child, he at once rushed to the prison cell, and lifted the female child high, catching it by the feet and was about to dash her against a rock, when it slipped from Kansa's grip and assuming the beautiful form of the Divine Mother vanished saying, "Wretch, they destroyer is flourishing in Gokula". There was a great joy and rejoicing in Gokula at the birth of a son to king Nanda and queen Yashoda. Yashoda was quite unaware of the exchange that had taken place during the night.

The Janmashtami celebrations start right from the early morning with bath in sacred waters and prayers, etc., but the climaxes reaches in the midnight with the rising of the moon, which marks the divine birth. On this auspicious day, strict fast is kept and broken only after the birth of Krishna at midnight. The temples and homes are decorated, scenes depicting Krishna's birth and his childhood pranks, etc., are staged with models both living and inanimate. Child Krishna's image is put into a richly decorated swing and rocked with a tender care all the day by the devotees. At night after birth, a small image of toddling Krishna is bathed in Charnamrita, amidst chanting of hymns, blaring of the conches, ringing of the bells and joyous shouting of "victory to Krishan".

In Braja Mandala, especially in Gokula and Mathura, this festival is celebrated with greatest possible religious fervour and enthusiasm and the special deliberations of the day are relayed on the air.

People from distant places congregate to Mathura and Vrindavana on this day to participate in the festival. The piety and fast observed on this day ensure birth of many good sons, and salvation after death. Reading and recitation of the Bhagvatam and Geet Govindam are most recommended on this day.

Dussehra

Dussehra or Vijay Dashmi is a very popular Hindu festival, celebrated with eclat throughout the country. It is observed on the tenth day of the bright half of Ashvina (September-October).

It is a ten-day celebration, during which Ramlila which is based on the epic story of the Ramayana, is staged at various places in most of the cities and towns in northern India with elaborate rituals. During its performance, the Ramayana is constantly recited accompanied by music. It presents a fine blending of music, dance, mime and poetry before anenthusiastic and religious audience sharing every event of the story with the actors.

Struggle between the forces of good and evil, and the eventual victory of the former over the latter, is basic to the Ramayana theme. Rama symbolizes the best in humanity, and Ravana the evil forces. Dussehra in Sanskrit also means taking away the ten sins. The ten heads of Ravana, represents these ten sins and Rama destroys them. Ravana abducted Sita with the help of another demon named Maricha. Ravana kept Sita in the Ashoka Grove and persisted in making Sita his wife, but Sita always thought of her husband Rama. Rama sent his messengers to Ravana and urged him to return Sita, but the evil minded Ravana refused to do so. Rama set off for Lanka with Sugriva, Hanuman, Angada, Jambvana and hundreds of other mighty monkeys. Ravana's younger brother Vibhishana, a noble soul and devotee of God, however, took refuge with Rama. Rama built a causeway in the sea to carry him and his forces across the water.

Rama, along with his young brother Lakshmana, killed all the demons and regained Sita. Finally, they returned to Ayodhya in the vimana Pushpaka.

On this occasion huge effigies stuffed with brilliant fireworks are

raised at various open grounds and set fire to by Rama. The effigies belong to Ravana, his brother Kumbhakarna and son Meghnada. This marks the culmination and termination of the celebrations. Elaborate and gay processions depicting various scenes of the Ramayana in the form of tableaus, are taken out through bazars and main streets. Apart from all this, Ramlila is also performed as a dance-drama by professional troupes.

Dussehra festival held at Mysore, is one of India's most colourful phenomena. The spectacular procession taken out on this day is a veritable extravaganza. The colourful Dussehra fair and festival of Kulu is also very famous. Among the Ramlilas, the one staged at Varanasi under the patronage of the local Raja, desires mention. On this auspicious day Lord Rama is worshipped, prayed and meditated upon to obtain his blessings and favour. In old days the kings generally marched their forces on this day against their enemies, the day when Rama routed Ravana.

Navratra/Durga Puja

Navratras are observed twice a year, once in Chaitra, preceding Rama Navami, and then in Ashvin (September-October) preceding Dussehra. This nine-day Navratra commences with the new moon of Ashivin and terminates with Mahanavami, on the ninth lunar day of the bright half of the month. During these nine days, devotees keep strict fast and Durga is worshipped. The style of observing Navratra in different parts of the country may be different, but its sole aim is to propitiate Mother Durga and to seek her blessings.

On Pratipada (first lunar day of bright half of Ashvin) and earthen pitcher filled with water and its mouth covered with green leaves and an earthen lid, is installed with invocation of Ganesha, the god of learning and wisdom, and then Durga is invoked and ritually worshipped with durva grass, flowers, leaves, lamps, incense, new grains, raiments, etc. Barley are also sprouted and grown in a pot on this occasion, and the same are worn in caps and on ears on the final day. Unmarried girls below the age of ten are also worshipped and given gifts during these nine days. The aspirants sleep on the ground and keep strict fast all these days. A clarified butter lamp is always kept burning before the installed pitcher during the

celebration, and daily Durga-saptashti, Devi Bhagvat Purana and Devi Mahatmya section of the Markandeya Purana are read and recited.

In Bengal Durga Puja is celebrated with great excitement and festivity and huge puja pavilions, with ten armed Durga are set up. Durga, the beautiful but fierce goddess rides her mount of the lion, killing the demon Mahishasura. In each of her ten hands she holds one of the gods' special weapons; Vishnu's discus, Shiva's trident, Varuna's conch shell, Agni's flaming dart, Vayu's bow, Surya's quiver, Indra's thunderbolt, Kubera's club, a garland of snakes from Shesha, and as a charger a lion from the Himalayas. A fierce battle raged between Durga and Mahishasura, but finally she killed him with a spear.

Durga Puja surpasses all other festivals in Bengal in its popularity and mass appeal. During the celebrations music, dance, drama and poetry are performed before the enthralled audiences. The earthen images of goddess Durga are taken on the final day in triumphal processions from all corners of coverage on the river where they are ceremonially immersed. Durga Puja is more than a ritual as it invests the lives of every one, and produces a fevrish literary and artistic activity. Durga is supposed to visit her parents Himavan and mother Mena during these days only in the year. The final day marks the end of this brief visit, when she leaves for Mount Kailash, the abode of her lord and husband Shiva. Bengali ladies give an emotion-charged and affectionate send off to Durga, and the ceremony is characterized with a daughter's departure to her husband's house.

Shivaratri Shivaratri is both a festival and a vow to be observed. It means the 'Night of Shiva's and is observed on Shiva Chaturdashi of Phalguna, that is, on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Phalguna (February-March). It is celebrated by the Hindus of all faiths and castes all over the country. The devotees spend the whole night in the four watches in meditation, japa, kirtan, and reading and recitation of Shiva Mahima Stotra and Shiva Tandava Stotra. The lingam symbol of Shiva is Worshipped with Gangajal, milk, curds, honey and clarifed butter. Bael leaves, dhatura fruit,

aak flowers, etc., are also offered to Lord Shiva in puja. Bael leaves are very sacred and dear to Shiva.

Devotees in hundreds and thousands collect at the Shiva shrines and spend the whole night practising devotion and piety. Special puja celebrations are held at Varanasi, Tarkeshwar, Baidyanath, Walkeshwar, Rameshwaram and Ujjain. At Pashupatinath, in Nepal also, a grand celebration is held on this occasion. The devotees keep strict fast and do not take even drop of water. At Mahadeva, he is worshipped by various gods, including Brahma and Vishnu. He can easily be pleased to grant a desired boon. He is great and powerful god and one of the Hindu Trinity. He is Mahakala and destroys and desolves everything into nothingless, but he, as Shankara, also resorts and reproduces that which has been destroyed and dissolved. His symbol of phallus symbolises this reproductive power. As a Mahayogi, the great ascetic, he combines in himself the highest perfection of austere penance and abstract meditation. In this form he is a naked ascetic. Digambra, "clothed with the elements". He is also called Chandrashekhra, "moon crested"; Gangadhara, "bearer of Ganga"; Girisha, "mountain lord"; Kala, "time"; Maha-kala, "great time'; Pashupati, "Lord of the Universe"; etc.

A very interesting story is told by the devotees on this occasion to underline the significance of the vow observed on this day. Once, there was a hunter called Suswar. He lived near Varanasi. He earned his livelihood by killing and selling birds and beasts. One day he went on a hunting expedition, but was overtaken by darkness and could not return home. The forest was dense and full of terrible beasts of prey. For protection he climbed up a bael tree for the night. During the course of the night, he suffered the pangs of hunger and thirst on the one hand, on the other he was very much worried about his dear wife, children and old mother at home, who had been wating anxiously for his return.

In his great anxiety, he wept and began to pluck the bael leaves and dropped them on the ground. Under the tree there was a Shiva-linga, and that night was Shivaratri. The hunter's worship, though performed unwillingly, highly pleased Shiva. Therefore, the hunter

after his death, got a place in the blissful abode of Lord Shiva, and after ages was reborn as a king, named Chitrabhanu. The king observed Shivaratri and did great penance on that day.

Holi

Holi is one of the four most popular festivals observed by all without any distinction of caste, creed, status or sex. It is observed on the full moon night of Phalguna. It marks the end of winter and the advent of spring season. It is a two-day festival. On the first night bonefire is lighted in the evening or night. Before being lit, it is worshipped and offered water and grains, then people go round it to perform pradikshna. Children make merry, womenfolk sing gay songs and adults also sing phag to the accompaniment of cymbals and drums. People enjoy fun and like to play practical jokes on one another.

The next day, people amuse themselves by splashing coloured water and throwing coloured powder on their friends, relatives, neighbours and even passersby. Noisy and colourful processions are taken out through the bazars and streets. In refined people it is characterized by songs, music, floral decoration and splashing of perfumed water. Sweets and visits are exchanged and cold drinks prepared at home, are served liberally. People forget all enmity and embrace each other, with warmth and love and renew their friendship. New corn is baked and eaten on this day for the first time in the season.

There are several myths about the origin of the festival of Holi. According to one Puranic myth, there was a great demon Hiranyakasipu. He conquered all the three worlds and made the gods to serve him. He forbade practice of peity and worship of God, and instead declared himself God. People were made to worship him at the point of sword. But his son Prahlad, a mere child, a noble and great soul, was a great devotee of Vishnu and always chanted his name and sang his glories. It infuriated his demon father and he ordered "Let this evilsoul child be killed".

To kill Prahlad several fatal means were adopted, but none succeeded. At last a big fire was lighted and Prahlad was made to

sit in her aunt Holika's lap and she then jumped into the fire. Holika claimed immunity from fire, but by the grace of god, Prahlad came out of the fire alive and unscathed, but his aunt had died. The burning of Holi commemorates this event. It symbolizes the triumph of good over evil.

Kumbha-Parva

Kumbha means a pitcher or a water pot. In the beginning of the creation, the gods under the curse of Rishi Durvasa, were defeated and turned out of their abode heaven by the Durvasa. They went to Vishnu and sought his help. He advised them to churn the ocean for Amrit or elixir. When the Amrit Kumbha (pitcher of nectar) appeared, there ensued a scramble between the gods and the demons, and some of its contents splashed out and fell at four places.

These four places are Hardwar or Haridwar, Prayaga (Allahabad), Ujjain and Nasik. Now, Kumbha Parva or Mela is held every 12 year in rotation at these places. It is called Purana Kumbha, and the one held every six years, after the full ones, is called the Ardha Kumbha (half Kumbha). At Hardwar it lasts for about a month and half Kumbha). At Hardwar it lasts for about a month and half in Phalguna-Chaitra, when the sun passes to Aries, and Jupiter, is in Aquarius. At Prayag, it is held in Magh (January-February), when Jupiter is in Aries, and the sun and the moon in Capricorn. At Ujjain planets are in Libra. It is held on the banks of the River Shipra. At Nasik it is held on the banks of Godawari, in Shravan (July-August), when these planets are in Cancer. These Kumbha melas terminate with the final bath on the new moon day.

Kumbha Fair is the most magnificent bathing festival ever held in the world. Millions of people, which include saints, sanyasis, rishi-munis, priests, naga sadhus, mahants and milling crowds from all parts of the country, participate in it. Sometimes, the rush of devotees is so unmanageable that in spite of great preparations for several months ahead, there is a stampede, and the result is a mass tragedy. In the recent Kumbha Fair, held at Haridwar on March-April 1986, at least 100 pilgrims died and scores were injured. And it was not for the first time. The toll was much larger

in 1795, when 500 persons died and it was the largest in 1760 when as many as 18,000 pilgrims are said to have perished.

Because the Jupiter, the Sun and the Moon had helped in protecting the Amrit Kumbha from being snatched by the demons, demons, the position of these three planets determine the principal bathing days. During Kumbha Fairs, there are continuous recitation and reading of scriptures, Epics and Puranas. There are religious discourses; food, clothes, money and other gifts are given liberally to the needy, saints, and sadhus. There are endless processions of mahantas in richly decorated swinging palanquins, of ashsmeared naga (naked) sadhus in endless file and others with their matted locks, either dangling lose around their heads or tied into a high knot above. A holy dip during Kumbha Parva is highly meritorious, as it destroys all sins. The ancient Hindu scriptures wax eloquent in praise of these firs. These reflect the true soul of India, the glory and greatness that India was, and still is, and the living faith enshrined in the hearts of millions and millions of Hindus.

Satyanarayana Vrata

This Vrata can be observed either on Sankranti. Ekadashi or Amavasya or Puranmasi. But in Northern India, it is generally observed on the full moon day (Puranmasi) of every month. Satyanarayana or Satydeva means the Lord of Truth, and it is another name of Vishnu. The merits obtained by observing this Vrata are many. It destroys all sins and evils, and ensures peace of mind, bliss, prosperity, happy relations, health and truthfulness. In the Kaliyuga, worship of Lord Satyanarayana with devotion, is like the veritable wishfulfilling cow. There are many interesting legends in connection with the observance with the fast.

Once Devarishi Narada happened to visit the earth the Mrityuloka. He was very much distressed to find the people there in misery, ill health and poverty. He wanted to relieve the sufferings of the mankind, but could not find out any way. He went to Satyaloka and told all about it to Bhagwan Satyanarayana. Lord Narayana advised Narada to go on the earth again to tell the people to observe Satyanarayana fast on the day of Purnima or Keadashi, Amavasya or Sankranti. Their evils, sins sins and suffering would vanish

instantly and prosperity, happiness and bliss would be their sure lot, the Lord told Narada.

Narada returned to the earth and preached the message of Satyanarayana Vrata. People did accordingly. They observed strict fast, listened to the story of Satyanarayana, sang his praises and meditated on him, and had all their desires fulfilled.

On this auspicious day, the aspirants should get up early in the morning, after taking bath they should pray and worship Suryanarayana first of all, and thereafter invoke Satyanarayana. They should make a small pavilion with plaintain trunks, flowers, leaves, etc., and install therein an image or picture of Satyanarayana. Then, the Lord should be ritually worshipped with camphor, fruits, lamps, incense water, naivedya, betel leaf, etc., and then prasad should be distributed. And finally in the afternoon the fast should be broken.

There is another story which very beautifully underlines the spiritual significance of observing a vow on this day. There was a very poor Brahmin. He lived on alms and spent his days in misery. One day Lord Satynarayana took pity, and appeared before him in the guise of a Pandit or learned Brahmin. The Lord ordained him to observe the Satyanarayana Vrata. The next day was Puranmasi. He prepared a simple prasad of baked flour and sugar, and after worshipping Narayana with full devotion and faith, distributed the prasad, and partook of it and prospered.

On the next Puranmasi, he celebrated the fast on a grand scale. A poor wood-cutter chanced to pass by his house. The poor wood-cutter heard the Satyanarayana katha, ate the prasad, and being inspired observed the vow himself along with his wife and children, with complete devotion and piety proper for the occasion. Consequently, he became very rich, enjoyed all the joys of life and after death attained the blissful abode of Lord Hari, the Satyaloka.

Satyanarayana vrata is the easiest and most inexpensive way of self-purification and self-surrender at the lotus feet of Hari. One who observes it with full devotion and faith is sure to attain his heart's desire. Such a celebration creates healthy and pure

vibrations and purges the heart of all dross and evils.

Rsabha (*the bull*)

God. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). An unusual avatara of Visnu. Said to be similar to the Jain deity Rsabhanatha and therefore may represent an attempt to meld the two religions by absorbing Jainism locally.

Rukmini (*with gold ornaments*)

Goddess. Hindu (Epic and Purāṇic). The daughter of Bhismaka, she is the first consort of Krisna and typically stands to his right. Her son is Kama. She is also an *avatara* of Laksmi. Attribute: a lotus. Also Rukmabayi.

Rupini

Minor goddess. Buddhist (Mahayana). An attendent of Buddhakapala.

S

Sacred Plants of Hinduism

Hindus look with respect at the banyan tree, which lives for more than 400 years. They consider the *Pipal* tree sacred, believing that Brahma resides in its trunk. The Bel tree is associated with the worship of Lord Siva. The small Tulsi plant is the most important of all plants. It is associated with Lord Vishnu, and the leaves are offered to Lord Vishnu in daily worship. The presence of a Tulsi plant or Basil plant is a must in every devoted Hindu's house.

Sadbhuja-Sitatara

God. Budhist. An emanation of Amoghasiddhi and a variety of Sitatara. Colour: white. Attributes: arrow, blue lotus, bow, image of Amoghasidhi on crown, lotus and rosary. Three-headed.

Sadhumati (*good*)

Minor goddess. Buddhist (Vajrayana). One of several deifed bhumis recognized as different spheres through which a disciple passes. Colour: white. Attributes: staff, and sword on a blue lotus.

Sagaramati (*mind of the ocean*)

God. Buddhist. A *bodhisatva* or buddha-designate. Colour: white. Attributes: conch, and sword with staff.

Sakra (*the mighty one*)

God. Buddhist. The god of the month *asvina* and an epithet of the Vedic god Indra.

Sakti (*energy*)

Personification of a god. Hindu, Jain and Buddhist. The effective power, or creative force, of a deity in the form of a female aspect. In a more specitic context, the Sakti identifies the creative force of the god Siva, particularly the ugra or violent aspects Durga and Kali. The Sakti may frequently have the same characteristics and carry the same attributes as the principal god. In Tantrism, the unity of opposities is defined by the Sakti, which is the yoni or female sexuality that unites with the male lingam of Siva.

Sakyamuni (*the saze of the Sakyas*)

God. Buddhist-Lamaist [Tibet]. The historical buddha, known mainly from Tibet. He stands upon a lotus Colour: golden. Arribute: a bow.

Salagrama

Aniconic form of the god Visnu. Hindu (late). A fossil ammonite shell embodying the god and forming a part of daily ritual in many Vaisnava households as weli as appearing in monasteries.

Salagrama, Kumari Pooja Mudra & Nyasa

Salagrama is a smooth stone said to be the natural form (Swaroopa) of Lord Vishnu. This smooth stone is found mainly at the bottom of the Gandaki river in Nepal. The stone picked from the river is worshipped as it is without any consecrational ceremony.

Kumari Puja is a ceremonyassociated with Tantras. In this ceremony a 12-yea-old girl from a Brahmin family is installed on a Pita (a stool) and dressed up like the image of Shakti and worshipped accordingly. This ceremony is mostly conducted in the State of Bengal.

Mudra is a very artistic representation of holding the hands and fingers to indicate a particular meaning. Most of the gestures are finger-postures. They are intended to evoke in the mind divine powers as well as to intensify one's concentration. All Hindu deities exhibit some form of Mudra. The most important Mudras are: *Yoni Mudra, Padma Mudra, Gada Mudra, Matsya Mudra, Tattva Mudra, Sankha Mudra* and *Abhaya Mudra.* Most Hindu

MUDRAS AND NYASA



YONI MUDRĀ



GADĀ MUDRĀ



SANKHA MUDRĀ



TATTVA MUDRĀ



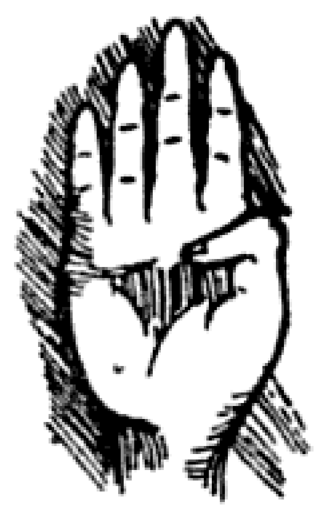
PADMA MUDRĀ



MATSYA MUDRĀ



NYĀSA RITUAL



ABHAYA MUDRĀ

deities, including Lord Nataraja, show Abhaya Mudra meaning "Fear Not, I will protect you."

The Yoni Mudra is a Shakti Yantra performed to invoke the power of the Goddess in the Sadhaka. Nyasa means "placing or marking" but his is actually a "touching". In this ritual various sensory awareness points of the body are touched by the finger tips and palm of the right hand. By doing so the body is *awakened* from its dormancy as per Tantras. The most popular *Nyasa* is known as *Sadanga Nyasa.*

Sama

Obscure heroic god. Dravidian (Tamil) southern India]. Known circa first to fifth century AD. The younger brother of the god of love Kama and equating to Samba, worshipped in nothern India.

Samadhi & Occult Powers

The meaning of Samadhi is (Sam-with, Adhi—lord) "Union with God'. Savikalpa means "having separateness. So in Savikalpa Samadhi the dulality of perception is manintained. The devotee purposefully maintains this separate identity identity most of the time.

Nirvikalpa Samadhi means "having no separateness". In Nirvikalpa Samadhi duality of perception does not exist at all. In that stage, the devotee becomes one with God.

According to Hinduism, there are four levels of consciousness. They are: 1. waking state; 2. dreaming state; 3. dreamless state or Sushupti; 4. Turiya. The fourth state Turiya is a state above mind and it is the highest level of consciousness. You may never see the Turiya state mentioned in any modern pasychology books. It is believed that a realised yogi enters the Turiya state whenever he meditates.

Jivanmukta means 'a person who is liberated while living'. Videhamukta means 'a person who is liberated after death, living in soul.' A Jivanmukta lives in the would just like any of us, but he is not attached to this world.

According to Tantras, the body is an assemblage of five Sheaths or

Koshas.

They are : 1. *Annamaya Kosha* (Anna—food, Maya—Made of, Kosha— Sheath; sheath made of food); 2. *Pranamaya Kosha* (Prana-Vital Energy; vital sheath); 3. *Manomaya Kosha* (Mano-Mind; mental sheath); 4. *Vijnanamaya Kosha* (Vijnana - Intellect; intellectual sheath); 5. *Anandamaya Kosha* (Ananda - Bliss, Maya—Made of, Kosha — Sheath; Sheath of bliss).

The five sheaths (Koshas) of the Self makes the self manifest as Jiva. These are : matter (Prakriti), life (Prana), consciousness (Manas), intelligence (Vijnana) and bliss (Ananda).

Powers like Clairaudience (hearing sounds which the normal human ear cannot hear), Clairvoyance (power of discerning objects not present to the senses), and Telepathy (capability of transferring and receiving thoughts) are some of the Siddhis known to mankind. Even the capability of materializing and dematerializing at will will be looked upon as a Siddhi. According to Hinduism, Siddhi is *an obstacle in the path of God-realization as it develops unwanted Ego in a devotee.* So Hinduism looks down upon Siddhis. But some are born with Siddhis, like Christlide masters and Christ himself. In Jesus Christ and masters like him, Siddhis or occult powers flow out like fragrance out of a rose flower. Christ gave no importance to his powers at all. He did not try to influence public opnion with his Siddhis. In fact he had an aversion for people who came for his occult powers. "*Unless ye see signs and wonders ye can not believe, go to thy home there thy son liveth*"is a symbolic statement of Christ's aversion to Siddhis. All great Hindu saints actedexactly like Jesus Christ.

It is said that some psychic powers of the lower level can be developed by using certain kinds of drugs. But this method of using chemicals to develop Siddhis is the most dangerous method with dire consequences. *Again, Hinduism forbids the use of any form of drugs in yoga practices.*

According to Hindusim, Siddhis are developed in a human being by the rise of Kundalini power or serpent power through the spinal cord. This Kundalini power resides in *Muladhara* opposite the

sexual organ at the bottom of the spinal cord in every human being. It is believed that as a human being evolves spiritually, this power rises up slowly and its goes through the five centers (Chakras) in the spinal cord and finally merges in the topmost point in the brain known as Sahasrara. At that point the person develops Siddhis. So it is believed that artificially stimulating that power from its resting point (Muladhara) by chemicals can do serious damage to the body, since the ordinary body is not designed to meet such a tremendous force developed in the body.

Some Mantras (potential chants) like *Pranava* or *Gayatri* can bring about unfoldment of consciousness and there is no limit to such unfoldment. These Mantras are the Mantras of the highest order and they develop Siddhis naturally and slowly, so they are always welcome. There are certain Mantras like *Vasikarani Mantra* which can be used for a specific objective, in this case to attract or win over someone.

Samantabhadra (*all-good*)

God. Buddhist. A form of Vairocana and a *dhyanibodhisattva* (spiritual meditation *buddha*). He sits on a throne carried by a white elephant. Colour: blue, green or white. Attributes: bell, cup, jewel, lotus with praver wheel or sword. In Tibet he is also known as Kun-tu-bzan-po. See also Bo Hsian.

Samantaprabha (*possessing universal splendour*)

Minor goddess. Buddhist (Vajrayana). One of several deified *bhumis* recognized as different spheres through which a disciple passes. Colour: red. Attributes: an image of Amitabha carried in the hand, and a staff.

Samba

Heroic god. Hindu [northern India]. The son of Krisna and Rukmini, alternatively the son of Visnu. The younger brother of the god Kama and consort of Indukari. Also one of the minor incarnations of Vishnu worshipped in the cult of the *pancaviras* by the Vrisni clans.

Samkarsana

Localized form of Balarama. Dravidian (Tamil) southern India and Sri Lanka]. Has a complexion 'white like milk', wears a blue robe with a red garland and carries a nanjil (plough).

Samvara (*keeping out*)

God. Buddhist (Mahayana). One of the emanations of Aksobhya and also of Hevajra. In Lamaism he is a four-headed tutelary yi-dam god. His Sakti is Vajravarahi. He stands upon one or more four- armed Hindu deities including Kalaratri and Bhairava. Colour: blue or black. Attributes: axe, bell, cup, drum, image of Aksohya on the crown, image of four-faced Brahma, knife, moon disc, skin, staff and trident.

Samveda

THE Vedas are the oldest known rehgious, philosophical and literary monuments of mankind. The term "Veda" signifies sacred knowledge, lore and wisdom. These most ancient documents of Indian thought, culture and sacred lore pave the path of final release or *moksha* through righteousness, and as such, their message and teachings cut across all the possible boundaries of country, creed and age. They are universal in their meaning and appeal, and belong to the whole humanity, and are for all the ages. The great German thinker Max Mueller very emphatically says, "I maintain that for a study of man, there is nothing in the world equal in importance with the Veda'. I maintain that to every body who cares for himself. for his ancestors, for his history or for his intellectual development, a study of Vedic literature is indispensable...To the present day India acknowledges no higher authority in the matters of religion, ceremonials, customs and law than the Veda." What consitutes Vedic lore, stands alone and apart in its splendour like the Pole Star shedding the divine light for the onward progress of entire humanity.

The Vedas are four—Rig, Yajur, Saman and Atharvan—but traditionally they are spolen of as "Trayi", the Triple Vidya or the threefold knowledge, because they deal with Jnan, Bhakti and Karma, and are in prose, verse and songs. The Rigveda underlines

the 'path of Jnan or Knowledge, the Yajurveda that of Karma or Action, and Samveda that of Bhakti or Devotion. Atharvaveda represents a synthesis of the three. The Vedas are invariably referred to as the "Triple Eternal Vedas" (Trayam Brahama Sanatana), probably also because the fourth one, that is, the Atharvaveda is relatively of quite a late origin. The Yajur and the Sama Veda repeat the Rigveda to a great extent, but the Atharva Veda is a collection of original hymns and borrows little from the Rigveda. These four together form the foundations of Indian religious, philosophical and cultural systems and observances. Indian culture and civilization has survived the ruthless ravages of time all these millenniums only because it is based on the firm rock-foundation of the wisdom of the Vedas. To possess a proper understanding and insight into Indian culture, thought and wisdom, it is essential that one has a good grounding in the Vedas, the supreme authority and knowledge of the people now called the Hindus.

Each of the four Vedas consists of the Sambita, and the Brabmana. The Sambitas contain original texts of the Vedas, comprising collection of suktas, hymns, prayers, incantations, religious formulas and litanies. The Brabmanas form the commentary and interpretations of the Sambitas or the original texts. The Brabmanas are again divided into Brabanas proper, the Aranykas, and the Upnishads. The Aranykas, or the Forest Texts, are called so because they were both composed and studied in the forest-dwellings. They contain the contemplation and meditation of the forest hermits and ascetics on God and soul. The *Upnisbads*, or the Vedanta attached to the *Aranykas*, contain the secret doctrines, and much of the ancient Indian though and wisdom. The term 'Upnishad". literally means, "setting at rest ignorance by revealing the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit". They form the sacred doctrine whose sole aim is the exposition of the secret meanings of the Vedas. They are the fountainhead of the Vedanta and Samkhva philosophies. Then, there are the "Vedangas" or the "Limbs of the Vedas", the auxiliary sciences, known as "Kalp-sutras" or popularly as "Sutras". They are aphoristic manuals on rituals, phonetics, grammar, etymology, astronomy, etc. All these

above books constitute the Vedic Literature.

The apparent and the so-called polytheism in the Samhitas, etc., is, as a matter of fact, an aspect of the Vedic monism and monotheism. The Vedas have categorically declared many times that Reality is one. Sages call it by various names: " " God is one, but its dimensions are several. The various Vedic gods are simply the different manifestations of the same Reality. For example, It manifests itself as Savitr in the celestial region, as Indra in the mid-region and as Fire on the earth. As Fire He is the mouth of gods and lord of the home (grihapati). As Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt, the same Reality protects the devotees from the demons and evils, and blesses them with life-giving copious rains. As Savitr or Aditya on the highest plane, He is the great giver of life, wealth, energy, light, warmth and wisdom.

This so called multiplicity of gods amply reflects the essential Vedic doctrine, "All paths lead to the same goal". The Truth one and every one is seeking it. The individual temperament, time, place, name, etc., create the so-called differences. There is nothing than Brahman, and the world is but the manifestation of a part of Him:

"What was, what is, and what shall be

All is Om.

Whatever else is beyond the bound of three fold time.

That also is Om."

Brahman desired to become many, to procreate himself and he did so. He is the cause of universe and everything is in him. Indian wisdom did not believe either in regimentation of the approach to the Reality, or in limiting the Truth. That would have meant negating the Reality. That is why there is so much variety and diversity, and each one is allowed to follow his own path to Reality. These are many a flight of stairs leading to the same unifed vision of no-duality. The various gods, like other mortals, were born at some time or other. Most of them are the sons of Aditi. They were born during the course of evolution of the universe.

Some of the mortals rose to the height of divinity by their austerities and taps. This faciliates a direct communion between men and gods. Even an ordinary man can invoke the deities through mantràs for protection, blessings and beatitude. This also marks the universality of the Vedas.

The Vedas are called "*Srutis*", revelations, orally communicated by God, and heard, but not composed or written down by the Rishis. The Vedas are "apaurusheva", which means that their authorship cannot be assigned to any human agency, that they are breathed out by God and visioned by the ancieny seers. They are divine revelations emanating from Brahman. Thus, the Vedas are impersonal knowledge and wisdom received by the "drishtas", the seers. The seers are not their composers individually or collectively, but were blessed with the divine inner audience from Him. It means that the knowledge of the Vedas was received by the Rishis in a state of supra-normal consciousness. Their non-authorship imparts to the Vedas a universality peculiar to them.

But there is a considerable difference of opinion among the scholars and thinkers as what portion constitutes the Veda proper. One school believes that whole of the Vedic literature comprising Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranykas and Upnishads has emanated from Brahman. They regard all these portions or books as revealed and visioned. On the other hand, there are others, who have firm conviction that the Samhitas or the texts of the Vedas are alone the Veda proper, and the rest are the appendices. They are of the opinion that the Brahmans, etc., do not form a part of Sruti, because they are not the words of God, but a commentary on them. According to them the Samhitas are the foremost and supreme authority and the rest are secondary, and authority only in so far as they are in consonance with the original texts of the Vedas. Brahmanas, Arankas and Upanishaḍs are the works of the Rishis and ascetics. They interpret and comment upon the teachings of thy Vedas, and so are quite separate. They are named after their composers and authors, and so cannot be called the Vedas in a strict sense. These scholars regard the four Samhitas as the only Sruti, or revealed words of Brahman, and the rest of the Vedic

literature as a mere commentary, Maharishi Dayananda Saraswati was foremost of such thinkers as regarded that Samhita texts alone constituted the original Vedas.

Although the Brahmans and Upnishads are later than the Samhitas, yet the ideas represented by both the sets of texts are the same. They all are harmonious and homogeneous. There has been aconstant and continuous growth, but there is no departure. The Brahmanas interpret and comment upon the sacrifical texts of the Vedas, while the Vedanga or Upnishads interpret their philosophy. The whole of Vedic literature marks the progression and expansion, but not departure or diversion.

The Samved Samhita

The term "Saman" means a chant or melody, and it designates the whole Samhita of the Samveda, because it is metrical, set to music, and is meant to be sung and chanted by the udgatr priest at the time of fire sacrifice. Except the 75 suktas or hymns, most others of the Samveda are borrowed from the Rigveda. Of these 75 hymns, some are partly found in other Samhitas, and some are only pieced together out of various suktas of the Rigveda, and so offer divergent readings. But traditionally it is held that there is no repetition in the Vedas, because a mantra in different texts and contexts reveals different meanings and when the Vedic texts are revealed and visioned words how there can be any repetition. Would God repeat Himself?

The Samveda comprises two parts: (1) the 'Purvarcbika" and (ii) the "Uttrarcbika". Archika means a "verse collection". The Purvarchika consists of five *kandas*, viz., Agneya Kanda, Ayendra Kanda, Pavaman Kanda, Aranyka Kanda, and Mahanamnya Archika. Uttrarchika is also divided into books and chapters. The hymns or strotas in the Purvarchika are comparatively more orderly in their arrangement and are older in composition than the verses of Uttrarchika. The later also introduces some such melodies as for which the Purvarchika has no chant.

The Samveda, about half the size of Rigveda, is the songbook of the *Udgatr* priests, and its text is all drawn from the Rigveda, but it

is set to music. The hymns in this Veda are addressed to Indra, Soma and Agni. Among the Vedas, Samveda is regarded the foremost. In the Bhagvat Gita Lord Krishna has declared, "Of the Vedas I am Sama, (10:22). Similarly in the 8th verse of the 7th chapter of the Gita, Sri Krishna says that in all the Vedas He is the sacred pranav or syllable OM, And Samveda is one of the forms of *pranava.*

The Chandogya Upnishad, associated with the Brahman of Samaveda, calls Saman the blossom of the Veda tree. In the beginning of the same. Upnishad a verse praising Samveda reads:

"Om. One should meditate on this syllable as the Udgitha chant, for every chant starts with Om.

"The essense of all beings is the earth, the sessence of earth is water; the essence of water is plants, the essence of plants is man; the essence of man is speech; the essence of speech is the Rigveda; the essence of the Rigveda is the Samveda, and the essence of the Samveda is the Udgitha chant,

"Speech is the Rigveda, breath the Samveda, the syllable Om the Udgitha. Now these two form a union, speech with breath and Rigveda with Samveda. Their union consists in Om, it is in this sound that they are united. Whenever they come together and unite, they fulfil each other.

"He who knows this and meditates on this syllable as the Udgitha chant, he himself becomes fulfilled."

In the Samveda the element of devotion predominates over all others. Devotion transforms an action or karma into a *nishkama karmayoga* (motiveless action) through love and worship of God. Worship, rituals, acts of devotion, piety, etc., represent the practical aspect of religion. All these acts directed towards a personal God. are sweetened by love for the diety. Love and devotion for a personal diety is more often a love for a higher ideal or an impersonal God. Devotion combined with prayer, etc., to God in his personal or impersonal aspects, takes hold of the whole aspirant and deepens his emotions, strengthens his will, and expands his intellect leading to identification with cosmic consciousness. It

helps in meditation by freeing the mind from impurities and attachments.

The path of worship, prayer and faith is far easier than that of knowledge. Faith is the jewel and crown of all desires, and is easy to attain. The path of knowledge also leads to final release and salvation, but it is difficult and beset with many obstacles. It has been likened to the edge of a sword, and there are many dangers of the aspirant falling on it. Through devotion salvation comes freely, and of its own accord. The Samveda shows this path; which is neither difficult nor has many obstacles to block your progress.

From known to unknown and concrete to abstract has been the path of the Vedas and Indian sahbana. They take the aspirant step by step to the higher and still higher spiritual attainments. This is the process of self and God-realization based on the ascending order of things. The rituals, devotion and sacrifices begun at a gross level gradually become subtle, mental and symbolical until there is no duality, and the aspirant becomes one with Him and all his creation. There are different levels of Upasana and meditation, meant for the aspirants according to their mental progress, degree of achievement and maturity of mind on the path of spiritual search. Those on higher rungs of the ladder of spiritual achievements cannot and should not look down upon those who are still in the process of growth, or say, spiritually unborn.

Ceremonies and celebrations are in man's blood. A celebration, sacrifice, worship or a ritual when turned inward, means cosmic identification and awareness. These are always a recurring phenomenon. A Vedic aspirant celebrates regularly with the gods and the world. The true celebration and sacrifice, spring from the identification of the self with the ultimate. Prayer, austerities, rites, religious sacrifies etc., reflect our passionate soul-urge to seek and merge into that cosmic Reality. All our religious observances and meditations have no significance apart from that Reality. The Chandogya Upnishad in one of its (3:16-17 highest conceptions declares that "Man himself is a sacrifice". The three stages of life are the three periods of sacrifice, presided by the Vasus, the Rudras and the Adityas respectively; the sufferings and distress are *diksha*

(initiation); charity, non-killing, truth, etc., the *dakshina*; the marriage laughter, etc., hymns to gods, and the death, the bath after the sacrifice is complete.

The Samveda

Purvarchika/Part First

Agneya Kanda/Book One

O Agni come, praised with hymn, to feast and sacrificial offering, like a Hota in the Yajna. Thou hast been ordained Hota of every yajna, by Gods among men. Agni, we accept as Hota, the Revealer of the Vedas, envoy of the Gods, All-knowing, Giver of all wealth. Served with devotion, Resplendent, Pure, duly adored, remove our sins and afflictions. I praise Agni, dearest unto us all, like a beloved friend, like a war-chariot grantor of our desires.

O Agni, do guard us against all malignity of our for and the hate of mortal man. O Agni, come, I chant more songs of praise for Thee; be more puissant with these sacrificial offerings. Angi, I long for Thee with praise. I receive Thy knowledge upto my pulasting heart, like a devoted son. O Agni! Thou art realized by the learned men by churning of their hearts as fire is produced by rubbing together the sticks. O Agni, protect us full well with Thy bright radiance. Thou alone art our God to show us the right path.

Agni God is one but sages call it by various names, Here in the Vedas Agni Mitra, Varuna, etc., are used for God. These various names manifest the different aspects and attributes of the same and one Reality.

II

O God, our oberisance to Thee, the people sing reverent praise to Thee to gain strength. Smite Thou the foe with Thy full might. O God, sing They praise, admirable Messenger, Grantor of fruit of our works Immortal, Worthy of the highest praise. Omniscient! O adorable God, the hymns of the devotees sung in Thy praise, come to Thee on the wind. O God, the Illuminer of night, may we worship Thee full of reverence, day by day morning and evening.

O Agni, knowable through hymns of praise, take abode in our hearts for our weal. We adore Thee with our hymns, Thou, the Chastiser of the wicked ones.

We invoke Thee, May Thou manifest Thyself with Maruts at the sacrificial altar of our hearts. I render homage with reverence, God, like a longtailed steed, Imperial lord of sacrificial rites. I invoke Thee, all radiant, residing in the hearts, as do the men of wisdom and action. Man enkindle Thee, O God in his heart with songs to develop his mind, so do I, Effulgent Lord, the sun, on the yonder side of heaven, is seen by the people all the day, verily obtains light from the Primeval Refulgent Source.

III

Worship Agni reverently, the Giver of Prosperity, the Mighty Lord, Brother and Friend in all our good deeds. Lustrous Agni, with His blazing splendour defeats the ignoble foes, and bestors on us the wealth, etc. Agni, be gracious, Thou art great, and accessible by the pious man. Thou comest to sit in our heart. O God, protect us against disease and distress, O Eternal, consume our foes, with Thy blazing flames. O Resplendent Agni, harness Thou, They steeds, most excellent in speed, they carry you so fast.

O Refulgent Agni, worthy of reverence, we worship Thee ever, invoked by all men, Lord Almighty. Agni is the Head and Height of all, like the Sun in heaven, the Master of the Earth and Knower of the seeds of our actions is he. O Agni, Thou so graciously preach the Gayatri-mantra among us and carry our sacrificial offereings to Gods. O refulgent Lord. an austere devotee manifests Thee through his speech of praise. O Agni, Purifier and Remover of sins, hear Thou my call.

Agni, the Lord of strength and wisdom, givath precious gifts to the pious men. is Omnipresent. Like the Sun in heaven looked upon by all, He, the Creator of the Vedas, is known by His divine virtues of Effulgence, Purity, etc. Praise Agni, O man, in this sacrifice, the Lord whose sacred laws are ever true, who is Omniscient and endowed with divine virtues, and is Remover of diseases and

distress. May the divine powers of God grant us our heart's desires, and fulfilment. May they rain happiness all over us. O Lord, protecter of the saints, Thou fulfillest the desires of him who lauds Thee to gain control over his senses.

IV

O men, sing the glories of Agni at every sacrifice, let us laud the Everlasting God, Creator of the Vedas, even as a well-beloved friend. O Agni, preserve us by one Veda (Rig), protect us by the second (Yajur), preserve us by three Vedas. O Almighty Lord, preserve us well by the four Vedas (Rig, Yajur, Saman and Atharvan). O Agni, Effulgent, most Youthful, pure Brilliance, kindled in the heart of a devotee, shine on us with They sparkling beams, Lord of charity. O Agni, who art worshipped well let the wise be dear unto Thee. Let the wealthy princes, and governors, who protect the kine, Vedic wisdom, etc., be beloved of all. O Agni, Lord of the world, mighty art Thou, the Ever- present, Household-lord, Guardian of the sky. O God, Lord of men, Thou consuments the Demons.

O God, Thou, Effulgent gift of Dawn, bestows various pleasures and much wealth on us and on him who offers you oblations. O Immortal God, Creator of the Vedas, Thou givest sense-organs, which awaken with the rising Sun and receive knowledge. O gracious Lord, the refuge of all, Thou art Wonderful; send us Thy bounteous help. Thou the charioteer of the earthly wealth, find rest and protection for our progeny. Agni, Thou alone art Famed, far and wide, Righteous, Omniscient, Enkindled, Radiant Lord, the wise singers invoke Thee with the hymns. O holy One, grant us wealth bringing fame among men and prolonging life. Thou Lord of the Universe, bless us with wealth, earned through righteousness, which many crave, and brings much glory. Lord, the Giver of pleasures and rewards, grant us the wealth of wisdom. To Him, like the first vessels filled with honey, to Agni let the Vedic hymns go forth.

V

O Yajin, I say unto Ye with his stotra, "I am the Guardian of strength, Good unto all, Bestower of wisdom, Lord, Adorable, Eternal and the Giver of the fruit of actions."

O Lord Agni, Thou lies hidden in the womb of logs, men kindle Thee. Ever alert Thou, rewardest the sacrificer, and shinest in material objects. O God, Thou appearth unto the heart of him who dedicates his acts to Thee. May our hymns of praise go nigh to Agni, who giveth strength to an Arya. At the sacrifice of speech, Agni is the Chief Priest, the lauds are the seat of grass and Maruts are the Ritvij. O God, Revealer of the Vedas, I crave with vedic-hymn the help that is most excellent.

O soul! laud Agni of vast glory, with sacred songs, for help and wealth. Ye Jivatman! God is well-sung in the Vedas, and is a dwelling for sure protection. Hear, O man, who hast ears to hear, early in the morning at Yajna, invoke Agni and other deities like Mitra, Aryaman, etc., the bearer of oblations.

O God, pervading the Earth and the high lucid realm of Heaven, Wax stronger with my hymn of praise, and fulfil all the creatures, O Most Intelligent. O Agni, Thou ascendth to the far off maternal waters of the Heavens from where Thou hast come here. O effulgent Agni, I, a contemplative man, always meditate for Thy acquisition. O Immortal Entity, whom the people reverence, shed thy brilliance on me, a learned man, so that I may become great and be revered by the people through the Vedic wisdom.

The God giveth wealth unto Ye. He wants full oblation, so pour it out in full and fill it again. Then will God grant Ye your desires. May God, the Author of Vedic-knowledge and Speech come to our Yajna which gives us perfect powers, righteous and brave offspring, is beneficial to all, and is performed by five officiating priests. O God, stand up erect for our protection like the Sun. We laud Thee along with other wise men therefore, being thus praised, be the Giver of strength and food to us, waging war against the unrighteous. O Om inipresent God, the man desirous of vast riches

surrenders himself upto Thee, and begets a heroic son, skilled in the Vedas and protecting thousands of human beings. With Vedic hymns and holy eulogies, we supplicate Thee, Lord of all, whom others too worship.

This Agni is the Lord of great prosperity, good-fortune, riches, noble progeny, herds of kine, and Remover of diseases and distress. O God, Thou art the Lord of our homes, our Hota at the Yajna, the Purifier, the Protector, the officiating Priest, and Giver of fruits of our actions. Thou art passing wise, and Bestower of boons. We human beings, Thy friends have chosen Thee as our Protector. Thou art most Mighty, Blessed, Peerless Remover of sins and Doer of good deeds.

II

Ye mortals worship Him, the Lord of hearths and homes, constantly at sanctified altars, offer oblations of clarified butter, etc., propitiate Him with prayers. Honour the officiating priest and Hota with homage and gifts. Thus perform the sacrificial Yajna. Verily wonderous are the acts of Agni, who never sucks at His udderless mothers' breasts, who bore him but grows instantly strong to carry out the great errand of bearing oblations to other Gods. O Agni, the material fire is Thy one manifestation, The Sun the second, the third the lightning which pervades the firmament. O Beautiful, Thou art beloved of all the liberated soul. O God, Knower of all, Worthy of homage, we send this laud to Thee with our pure intellect, like a car. May our intellect be ever pure, O Lord, let us never suffer harm in Thy company. The wise speak of Agni, as the Head of Heaven, the Messenger of Earth, the Guest of man, the Sovereign, the Mouth of Gods, and Worthy of homage.

As does the waters spring from the mountain ridges, so do the Gods through lauds, from Thee. O Agni, may our hymns and eulogies speed to Thee, as does the swift horse to the battle bearing the warrior. O Ye men, before you lie dead struck by thunderlike death, win for your protection the Effulgent Lord, the Giver of fruits of our actions, Prince of Yoga, the Punisher of the wicked, the Ritvij between the Heaven and the earth. Agni, the King,

All-pervading, lauded by the Yogis, worshipped in the heart with devotion, the Creator of animate and inanimate things, may shed the light of wisdom on the hearts of His devotees at the flush of morning. Agni with His lofty flames pervades the Earth and the Heaven and bellows like the Bull. He hath come nigh to our hearts from the sky's farthest limit, and is higher than others. O mortals, generate Agni, the Lord of us all, from two fire sticks taken in hands and rubbed together. He, the Dweller of our homes, is farseen with its flashing flames.

III

Just as fire is awakened by the people's fuels, a milch cow yields milk at each dawn, so is our soul awakened through Yoga. Just as birds fly high above the trees, and the Sun's rays pervade the vault of heaven, so emancipated souls attain God, the abode of bliss. O man, realize in your heart Him, who is the Conqueror of different worlds, the Destroyer of forts, the most Wise, Free from delusion, Effulgent, Knowable through the Vedas, the Guide of our intellect, and richly Armoured in the splendid rays of the Sun. O God, Thy one form is bright like Day and another dark like Night. Thou Nourisher of all, the Lord of life and food, Thou art like the Sun, let Thy bounty be auspicious here in this world. O gracious God, Granter of cattle wealth, right speech, knowledge of various noble actions, may Thy gracious will be ever upon us, so that we possess happiness and illustrious children. God, the Giver of fruits of our actions Dweller in the heart of a devotee, Protector of bodies, Adorable, Pervading all, Omnipresent, Bestower of wealth, grains and desired objects, is seated in our hearts.

O man, learn to know the mighty deeds God, as you know the Sun who is effulgent, life-giving, mighty, worthy of praise, energetic, and attractive. Just as well cnerished germ is preserved in pregnant woman, so is Agni preserved in the two kindling fire sticks. The awakened souls worship Him day by day with oblations. O Agni from days of yore Thou hast been chastising the wicked; the forces of evil can never overcome Thee in the fight. Thou consume the raw flesh devourers, let none of them escape Thine divine

weapons.

O Agni, resistless on Thy way, pave for us the path leading to glorious opulence and strength, and bring us most mighty splendour. The man who serves Thee, and offers sacred gifts enjoys bliss and Thy protection and help. O Agni, the Purifying and Resplendent God, Thy brilliance pervades the heaven; like the Sun, Thou beamest with thy radiant glow.

O mortal men, worship Him at dawn, the Immortal one, who is much beloved by all, and to Whom all men offer their oblations. O most Radiant Agni, shine on high. Grant us Thou riches and strength, our most precious songs are for Thee. We worship Lord Agni and glorify Him with Vedic hymns. He is loved by all and is Omnipresent. Sing hymns of praise to Agni, the Effulgent, whom men always keep foremost for their eulogies. May we realize Him, the noblest Agni. Friend of men, the Remover of ills, and Most brilliant. Agni, the cause and source of the sun, is born in a Yajna by the reflective, truthful and intelligent co-sacrificers and Hota. They are like His father, and their faith the mother.

V

We place our complete trust in King Soma, Agni, Varuna, and in Aditya, Vishnu, Surya, and the Brahmin-priest Brihaspati. Just as the conquerors of the world walk exalted and rise high in esteem, so do our oblations go up high to Gods. O Agni, we kindle Thee in Yajna so that Thou mayest rain ample happiness and wealth. Both Heaven and Earth are great oblation Pray Him, O awakened men, God is the goal, the aspirant recites the Veda in His praise. This is the prayer of Him. He holds all knowledge in His grasp even as the felly round the wheel. O Agni, shoot forth and destroy with Thy might the violent sinners on every side, break down the strength of the demons and evil-doers. O God, let the Vasus who have observed continence upto the age of 24, Rudras, who have observed it upto the age of 36, and Adityas who have done so upto the age of 48 years, and who therefore shine like the Sun, be your companions.

I

O Bounteous One, I surrender myself unto Thee with many a laud, as a servant does to a mighty master, who chastises the wicked. O wise men, preach the lofty lore of the Vedas to virtuous man. Sing His glory who is Purifier, the Guardian of true knowledge, Genius, and the Creator of all O God, Thou art lord of cows, Vedic knowledge, food-material and strength. Thou art the embodiment of prowess and master of the Sun. O God, Thou art great Purifier, and most Venerable, bring the learned to a man who is virtuous in actions and temperament. O great Donor and Giver of delight, Thou drive away our foes and thus shinest. Born of seven mothers (seven fires or sparks), He is firm and sure for the glory of the wise, and hath set His mind on glorious wealth.

May the Infinite, ever come nigh to help and protect us. May He, the Bestower of happiness and peace chase away our foes. O men, worship and pray Him; whose smokes wander at will and none may grasp his flames. No mortal foe can ever prevail on him by deceit, who has served well the God with oblations. O Agni, Lord of the virtuous, drive far away the wicked foe the evil-minded thief, and make our path easy. O brave God, Lord of virtuous, on hearing this new laud of mine redue to ashes with thy flame the wicked and evil foes.

II

Sing forth ye worshippers, to Him, the most Munificent and Sublime with His Refulgent glow. O Agni, whom Thou choosest as friend, conquerers all impediments and does great deeds by Thine aid. Praise Him, the Lord of light, the Messenger of Gods, who bears oblations to them. Anger Him not, our worthy guest, the bright God Agni, praised by many learned men, an excellent Hota, skilled in Yajna. May Agni, duly worshipped bring us bliss, may our sacrifice, virtuous actions and eulogies sung in His praise bring bliss. O God, we have chosen Thee, Immortal, Best among the Gods, and Fine Finishes of the holy sacrifice. Bring us that splendour, O Agni which may overthrow each fiend and sinner in

our house, who deserves the wrath of every man. Whenever, the God is friendly to us human beings, the race of Manu, all our evils, diseases and disasters are swept away.

Ayendra Kanda

III

O Worshippers, sing the praise of Lord Indra, invoked and praised by many, who would bless you, as He does the Earth like a King. O Indra, Possessor of hundreds of powers and wise designs, let me rejoice in Thy joy, which is most glorious of all. O speech, go unto Indra and tell Him your aim. The two mighty ones, that is Earth and Heaven may bless the sacrifice. Let both the ears of men be blessed with the recitation of holy hymns. O learned men, well versed in the Vedas, sing praises of Indra, so that He may come. We praise Indra for destroying the mighty forces of the demon Vritra. He is All-powerful and Giver of happiness.

O Indra, Thou art embodiment of strength, power and victory. Thou, Mighty one, bestowest might indeed. The sacrifice made Indra strong and great when he unrolled the earth and gave strength to the sacrificer. O Indra, if I become also powerful and Lord of wealth as Thou art alone, my worshippers would become rich in kine, etc. O men, blend Soma juice for Indra, each offering more excellent. He is our Hero, joy and inspiration. O good God, enjoy this Soma juice to Thy heart's content, the well pressed juice, Lord, we offer it to Thee.

IV

Sun, Thou soars high upto great Indra, who is well known for his wealth, heroism, knowledge and benerficence. He hurls the thunderbolt to subdue the foes for happiness of mankind. O Surya, the slayer of demons, whatever is there in the world, has been caused by Thee, and is all in Thy power. Indra, the Youthful, is our friend, who with his wise guidance brings back on the right path the souls astrayed afar. O Indra, let not evils overpower us stealthily from any direction due to darkness of our ignorance. May

we, with Thee as our Friend subdue that evil. O God, give ample wealth, the ever victorious wealth, that delights the brave, and is an excellent aid to face onslaughts.

Both in mighty and lesser fights, we invoke Lord Indra, our Friend, who hurls his bolt to subdue the foes. Indra drank Soma juice to His fill, and being thus inspired, subdued the foe with his manly might in the battle in thousand ways. O God, faithful to Thee, we sing aloud Thy praise. O Lord, Indra, take note of this act of ours. Those who perform the sacrificial rites by seating on sacred Kusa grass, have the ever Youthful Indra as their Friend. O Indra, sweep away all our foes, smite them down who torment us, and give us the wealth for which we long.

When we talk together, we hear as if it were close at hand. It reflects that speech is in their hands, which works wonders. O Indra, these friends of us, equipped with Soma look to Thee, just as men with fodder look to the herd of cattle. Before Thy righteous displeasure, bow down all people and men, as the rivers bow them to the sea. We choose the protection of mighty Gods, that it may help and succour us. O God of wisdom, make my breath free and vigorous in motion, so that I may realize the true relation between speech and its meaning.

May the mighty Indra, the Destroyer of ignorance, the Embodiment of bliss, listen to our prayers, and grant us wisdom. O God, grant us this day ever prosperity and progeny, and drive afar proverty and distress. Where is that Mighty and ever Youthful Indra, the strong-necked never bending down? What Brahmin, the knower of the Vedas ministers to Him? There where the mountains stand, and streams meet at confluence, the Sage manifests himself and practices Yoga. Praise the Lord through songs, the Master of mankind, the Sovereign and most liberal, Who alone controlleth men.

O Lord of ample wealth, these songs of praise have been sung aloud to Thee, as milch-kine low to their calves. The wisemen know that in the mansion of the Moon, there is hidden light of the Sun, that is, the Moon borrows her lustre from the Sun. Similarly the light of God is there in our souls. When Indra, brought the

water in streams down on the Earth, the Sun, then with His beams stood by his side.

The Earth, the streaming mother of liberal Maruts, united with Indra and Surya sustains life. Come, Indra of rapturous joys to our sacrifice, and enjoy the flowing Soma juice. O men, offer rich oblations in this Yajna and then nicely finish the sacrifice to the end with the cleansing bath. May I receive deep knowledge of eternal law from God, my Father, and then grow resplendent like unto the Sun. May we be rich in strength and knowledge, obedient to the Lord, so that wealthy in food we may rejoice.

II

O men, praise the God, All-conquering, Guardian of our foods, mot Munificent, the Omniscient, and adored by all wisemen. O friends, sing the praise of Lord God, the Embodiment of all virtues, the Protector of His devotees and ever cheerful. O God, wisement worship Thee, as Thy friend with Vedic hymns. We, Thy ardent devotees, longing for Thee, also worship Thee. Many sing the songs of praise to God. May we also sing aloud his praise. O Indra, here is thy Soma drink, pure and excellent, come hither and drink.

Just as a good milch-cow calls him who milks her, so we invoke and glorify God day by day for the acquisition of knowledge and protection of our people. O Indra, I pour the Soma juice for Thee to drink. Sate Thee and enjoy to the full. O Indra, the Soma poured in cups and saucers is for Thy pleasure, drink that, for Thou art Lord thereof. On the occasion of every struggle and need, we as friends call upon Thee, Lord Almighty for our protection and succour. O friends, come ye hither and sit down, sing the glory of God and bring hymns of praise.

III

O Lord of affluence, this Soma drink hat been prepared with much exertion. drink of it, Thou worthy of praise. Great is our Indra, the upholder of the thunderbolt. Wide as heaven extends His Power. O Indra of mighty arms, gather with Thy dextrous right hand many

kinds of nutritious food for us. O men, praise Indra, as he is famed, the Lord of the kine, the Son of Truth and the Lord of the brave. With what unique help, with what powerful army, the wonderful friend, will come?

Indra, the ever conquering Lord, rushes down to help us, drawn to our songs of praise. May I attain firm intellect by meditating upon the wonderous Lord, the Loely friend, the giver of the fruit of good and bad actions, the Learned Lord of the assembly. May all the paths beneath the sky whereby Thou speedest winds on, let all spaces listen our voice. O Almighty Indra, Thou giveth us excellent food and strength, when kind towards us. Here is ready the Soma juice. The Maruts, the twin Ashvins and the self- luminous Sun drink of it.

IV

The intellect of the meditative man full of wisdom, and inclined to act, realizes the Lord in the heart. May we, Thy worshippers, O Lord, be ever non-violent, free from illusion and acting according to the commandments of the Vedas. O soul, the chanter of Brihad Saman, evening has descended, sing loudly the praise of the Self-effluent God, the Creator of all. Dawn, the dear daughter of the Sky, now shines forth and scatters darkness. I extol the praise of high Ashvins. O Indra, Thou armed with indomitable might and the bones of dead Dadhicha, destroy the innumerable demons led by Vritra.

Come Lord, Mighty is strength, Protector of all of us, and delight Thyself with the Soma drink at our feasts. O Indra, Thou slayer of Vritra, come hither to our side, Mighty with Thy mighty aids. Indra's might shines forth, as he revolves Heaven and Earth like the blazing shields. As a pigeon approaches his mate, so does Indra drawest near us hearing our prayers. O God, May we have Thy health giving, healing and blissful balm in our hearts. May Lord, prolong the days of our life.

V

Never is he harmed whom the excellently wise Gods Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman protect. Be gracious and help us Lord, in acquiring kine, steeds and chariots according to our wishes. These kine yield their milk and butter and thus help in Thy sacrifice. Indra, O much lauded, many named Lord, mayest Thou manifest Thyself at each of our Soma sacrifice. May Goddess Saraswati, endowed with plenteous wisdom, enriched with prayer grace our sacrifice with her presence.

Who among the mortals can sate this Indra with Soma juice? He shall make Him grant us precious things. Come Indra, we have made this divine juice for Thee, sit Thou here on the sacred kusa grass and drink of it. May great unassailable heavenly favour be showered on us by Gods Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman. O Indra, Lord of plenteous riches, the Supreme Guide, the Settler of many, we depend on one like Thee.

I

Let our worship make Thee glad. Grant us Thy bounty, O thunder-upholder, sweep away the enemies of Vedic lore. O Lord. Worshipped and prayed through our Vedic hymns, protect Thy devotee amidst us, Thou with streams of bliss are bedecked. Friends, Indra ever thinks of you, and tends you with care. The Lord is no heroic and loving, why do you not worship Him. Let the intellect plunge in the Lord, as the rivers flow into the ocean. O Indra, nothing excells Thee! The Udgatha chanters glorify the Great God, with their Samavedic songs, the Rigvedic reciters also do so through their Mantras. The Adhvaryus glorify Him, with the Yajurvedic hymns.

May Indra grant us desired strength and handy wealth. May He, the Omniscient God give us wisdom and wealth. Trully, the All-conquering God, sweeps away afar mighty fear, for firm is he and swift to act. These songs of praise reach Thee, with every oblation offered, as milch-kine fondly hasten to their calves. Indra, and Pushan we invoke for friendship, wealth and prosperity. O Indra,

the slayer of Vritra, none is better, mightier than Thee. Verily naught is like Thee.

II

O men, praise Him, the common Lord of all, the Saviour of our folk, the Giver of might, wealth and kine. O God, I praise Thee with Vedic hymns. As a beloved wife goes to her husband, so do these hymns reach Thee, our Protector, Showerer of peace and bliss. Verily, the mortals have good guidance, whom Gods Aryaman, Mitras and Maruts, the Friends of all, free from guide, protect. O Indra, give us the wealth for which we long, which is concealed in some strong chest or well or hill. O men, worship the mighty Indra, the slayer of Vritra, the Champion of mankind, for the sake of munificence and fulfilment or desires.

Indra, O mighty Lord, may we continue praising, Thy fame, fame of one like Thee. O Hero, may we realize Thee in our meditations. O Indra, at daybreak accept our oblation of Soma mixed with roasted corn-flour, with cake, curds and eulogies. Indra, Thou overcomest all the demons and evil forces, with Thy all conquering might. Thine are all these pleasures of the Soma juice, Lord Indra. Enjoy them and be pleased, Lord of royal wealth. For Thee, Lord of Light, Soma juice is pressed, and sacred grass-seat is spread. Indra, be gracious to Thy worshippers.

III

O men, seeking strength, please Indra with songs and sacrifice, just as the farmer waters his field with water drawn from the well. He is most liberal, Lord of limitless strength. O Indra come unto us, and grant us food that gives a hundred, yea, a thousand powers. The new-born Indra asked His mother Adite, as He upheld his shaft, who are the fierce and worthy opponents? We call Him for help and protection who is long-armed, and being lauded fulfils our desires. Mitra, the friend of all, Varuna, the Omniscient, and Aryaman, the just lover of the learned, lead us straight on the path of Dharma, that is, righteousness and duty.

Just as the lustrous Dawn sheds light on all objects from afar, as if She was present here, so does God giveth His light of knowledge from every direction. O Gods, Varuna, Mitra and Indra, most Intelligent, pour fatness on our pastures and sweet rains on the regions of the air. The winds that are in the firmament and are the cause and extension of speech, move as do the cows bending their knees when they bellow for their calves. God created this world in three ways, that is, the visible earth, the invisible subtle would, and shining solar world. His power is manifest in this world.

IV

O Indra, Thou shunnest the wrathful, and speedest to the devotee who offers libations of Soma. Enjoy the drink presented to Thee. What is the word addressed to Him, the Great God, excellently wise? For the same exalteth Him. Does not He know the worship offered by a poor and ignorant man? Does not He know the recitation of Gayatra Sama? He does know. Indra is pleased by songs of praise, He is the Lord of steeds and armies, the Friend of devotees who offer libations. O Lord, come to our libations, don't be angry with us. Thou art to us like a grand father, ever venerable.

When dost Thou O Lord, impede the flow of rains to them who are well learned in Vedas? Thou grandest copius rains to them who are dear like sons unto you. Indra, accept the Soma drink, according to the seasons, from the people learned in divine knowledge. Thy friendship is invincible, O Indra, love of the songs, we are the singers of Thy praise; O Soma-drinker, gratify us. O God, Thou grant us bodily strength, the ever conquering might. O Hero, Thou art mighty, and verily a friend to the brave. May Thy heart be won by us!

V

O Indra, Thou Lord of animate and inanimate things, Omnipresent, Illuminator of the Sun, we call aloud and praise Thee like unmilked kine. Indra, the Lord of the brave, we call on thee to win wealth and power. People in war call Thee alone. In adversity and exertion, we They devotees, worship and contemplate Thee only.

We sing praise to Thee, for wealth and gifts. Thou art Lord of wealth, rich in treasure, and giveth Thy singers wealth and thousandfold gifts. Just as cows low to their calves in stalls, so we praise Indra with songs, the wonderous God who checks our foes and delights in Soma juice. Loud we sing Brihat Sama and invoke at the sacred Yajna where Soma flows, so that Thou the Propitious and Protector may grant us wealth.

I make, Ye men bend with Vedic songs before Indra much invoked, as a wheel wright bends a wheel of wood for swift motion. Indra, enjoy Thyself with savoury Soma and cheer Thee with our milk draught. Be our friend, grant us wisdom, and guard us well for our weal. O Lord, come to the worshipper and enrich him with wealth and wisdom. O Masterol knowledge, give us strength to control our-sense organs. May we have strength to perform Yoga. God never overlooks even the lowliest one of you all. So, O men, let all of us drink deep the divine knowledge and be fulfilled O friends, glorify none else, but Him, the Bestower of Dharma and Artha. Be non-violent, sing together aloud His praise again and again.

I

No man can harm him who by his sacrifices has pleased God, the Protector of devotees, worshipped by the whole world and the Controller of all. Such a person performs his deeds without desire of their fruits. The God even without ligature, before blood is produced, joins the joints together of the neck, and He at his will deserves them. Many hundreds and thousands of steeds are yoked to Thy golden car, O Gad. Let these long-manned steeds speed Thee to our sacrifice to enjoy Soma. Come hither, Lord, riding the horses, brilliant like peacock's plumes. Let none check Thy course, as a hunter does a bird. Thou overcome them, as an archer does an animal. O God, Thou art verily the Mightiest, Thou blessest the mortal man. There is none Comforter as Thee, I address my words to Thee.

O God, Thou art far-renowned, the lord of power and might, the Guardian of mankind. Thou alone art unconquerable, and smitest down resistless foes. We call Thee Lord alone for and at the beginning of sacrifice. We call Thee at the completion of a Yajna

and also amidst war. We invoke Thee for the acquisition of wealth. May these my songs of praise exalt Thee, God of abundant wealth! Men, learned in holy hymns and pure, also sing their lauds to Thee. These exceeding sweet songs of our, these songs of praise come to Thee like ever conquering chariots that display their strength, gain wealth and provide unfailing help. Even as a thirsty deer repairs to the desert's pool of water, so should Thou come to us speedily evening and morning to enjoy the drink to Thy fill.

II

O God, Lord of action and intelligence, help us in gaining fame, wealth and protection. May we ever follow Thee, the Embodiment of bliss, Giver of wealth and might. O Indra, Lord of Light, whatever joy Thou takest away from the wicked and evil persons, prosper therewith, O God, those who praise Thee and perform sacritices for Thee. O friends, sing songs of praise to Mitra and Aryaman. Sing, Ye pious men, in Vedic verses, the glory of Varuna, the Protector of our homes, the King of kings. O Eternal, learned men, desirous of longevity for the sake of life's full enjoyments, laud Thee through Vedic hymns. O men, sing Vedic hymns to high Indra and Maruta. Indra, the Lord of hundreds of actions, the slayer of Vritra, slays the foes with his hundred knotted thunderbolt.

O learned Ritvij men, sing the hymns of Brihat Sama to the Great Lord, whereby the sacrificers realize in their hearts the ever Divine, Sin-remover and lustrous light. O Lord, give us wisdom and good deeds as a sire gives his son wealth and knowledge. Guide us on this divine path, O much invoked God, may we live long and behold Thy Light! O God, desert us not, be present with us at our divine sacrifices, Thou our sole Refuge. Thou alone art pur protection and Brother. O Lord, turn us not away! O God, Remover of evils and sins, we who have purified their hearts, whose Soma juice is ready in the Yajna, we sit here in Thy worship, like silent waters encompassing a holy island. Whatever strength is found in men and subjects, whatever spiritual power and beauty there exist in the five Aryan clans, grant us all these and manly strength.

III

O mighty Indra, Thou art verily our Guardian, the Showerer of rains. Thou art famed as Vrisha, the Embodiment of Dharma, in the Vedas. Thou art called by the same title. O Rain showerer, far and near, O Lord, whether Thou be far, or near at hand, Thou art the slayer of our foes. The worshippers invoke Thee in the sacrifice, with their lofty lauds and pressed Soma drink. O men, for the sake of obtaining spiritual and physical strength, sing to Glorious and Great Indra, the songs of praise, as ordained in the Vedas. O Indra, grant me and these, Thine devotees, for their weal, a triple refuge, triple strong and dwelling places, secure from triple afflictions. O friends, all beings born and ye to be born, enjoy all good things from Him as their heritage, like the rays that inherit the light from the Sun.

O eternal soul, a godless moral can never gain spiritual food, for a driver alone can yoke the steeds. Similarly a devotee alone can realize God through prayer and devotion. In every struggle and affliction let Him be invoked with songs of praise. He is the Slayer of foes, Remover of obstacles, worthy of praise; may our songs of praise, ordained by the Vedas, be ever sung in His glory. O God, the lower region, that is Earth, is Thine; Thou, nourishes the middle-one. Thou art sovereign of the highest, celestial region. Thus, Thou art verily the Lord of the whole universe. None in the universe, can resist Thee. O Omnipresent, creator of the universe, Liberator from bondage, where art Thou, whither art Thou gone? Thou, All-knowing God, art present everywhere, Thou pervadest all; the singer sings Thy praise. O friends, we the knower of Brahman, have been pleasing God in our previous births, the Punisher of sinners. Now, today in this well-known Yajna, let us glorify Him.

IV

I praise in song, the Great God, the sovereign Lord of men, accessible through Yoga, Pre-eminent, Vanquisher of fighting hosts and Chastiser of the wicked. O Lord, greant us security from that

whereof we are scared. O Indra, Thou art mighty to protect us; drive away with Thy powers our foes and enemies. O Lord of the homes, Thou art the strong pillar and support, Guardian like armour. Thou art the Friend of the learned and Yogis and grant them liberation from human bondage. Verily Thou art Great, truly Thou art Great O Absorber of all. O most Praised for greatness of Thy might, O God, Creator of all, Thou art Great by Thy greatness. A man becomes fair of form, rich in kine, steeds and chariots when favoured by Thee. Only such a man, full of virtues, knowledge and excellent powers, is fit to join the company of learned men. Not even hundred heavens or hundred earths can match Thee. O chastizer of the wicked, not even innumerable suns and universes created by Thee, can ever match Thee. O God, Thou art called by men eastward and westward, north and south; O Almighty Thou art with all everywhere. Omnipresent, invoked by many, Thou art there in all men. Omnipresent, who can ever be disrespectful unto Thee? The strong and learned with faith in Thee, offer oblations of Soma juice to Thee. This Mind being without feet, reaches earlier than those with feet. Leaving the place of deliberation and speaking loudly through his tongue, he enters the field of action with thiry steps. O God, Omnipresent, near to all, come close to us, with aids of firmly based resolves; come most Auspicious, with Thy most auspicious help. Good kinsman, to Thine kinsmen come!

V

O men, call to your aid, Eternal, All pervading, Inspirer of all, the Best Lord, Victorious, Immortal, Formless God, the showerer of rains and the most Beautiful. O God, even the learned who are far from Thee, are disliked by us. O Omnipresent, come and reside by us. O Omnipresent, come and reside in our hearts, and listen to our prayers. O men, prepare the Soma drink for Indra, the Upholder of thunder. Make ready your feast, please Him to favour us. He, the Giver, blesses him who gives. We call upon the God, who ever destroys the foes, Protects the good, is the Seer of good and bad actions, Master of all knowledge, the most manly help and maketh us prosper in the fight! Ye rich in wealth and wisdom, grant as blessings day and night. Let not your gifts ever fail. May not our

gifts of oblations ever fail!

Wherever a mortal worshipper sings praise of God, the Fulfiller of all desires, let him laud God, who protects the people and removes the sins. O reincarnating soul, preserve thou thy body's organs through the enjoyment of best food for it is through these organs of action and cognition that thou can realize God, the Remover of Sins. May God, Almighty, ever Cheerful, listen both our mental and vocal prayers, and come unto us to enjoy the sacrifice. O God Thou can never be given away for a huge price, not for a hundred, nor for a thousand, nor for ten thousand, nor for still higher, Thou, Upholder of thunderbolt, Chastiser of the wicked and the Master of ample wealth. O God, Thou art more to me than father or a niggard brother is. Thou and my mother, O Lord, are alike in rearing me to attain wealth and house.

I

These Soma drinks mixed with curds, have been prepared for thee Indra, the Thunderer. Come, drink and enjoy these. O Indra, these Soma juices with songs of praise have been prepared for Thy pleasure. Enjoy the pleasant drink, listen to our lauds and reward the worshipper, O Lover of songs! Now I call on Thee Indra, Who is like desire fulfilling cow excellent in gait, yielding milk in abundant streams, loveable and beautiful in appearance. O Indra, the lofty and huge hills are powerless to bar Thy way. None can prevent the act of Thine when Thou wouldest fain give wealth to one like me, who sings Thy praise. Who knows what vital power he wins while drinking with other gods? None knows how long he stays? Gratified with drinks, Indra breaks down the castles in his strength.

O Indra, control and punish the anti-Yajna men, remove riteless people from around our homes, and grow in strength and opulence, our Soma plant, desired by many a one. May God, the Creator of the universe the Lord of Vedas and their knowers, lover of His devotees protect our Vedic words. May He, the Invincible, protect us along with our sons and brothers and our vows difficult to fulfill. Never art Thou fruitless, never dost Thou desert Thy devotee O

Lord. Thy bounty, O God, is poured forth ever more and more. The best Slayer of our foes, yoke our soul to Yog wandering here and there from Thee. Come here with Thy high virtues to us, O Mighty God, to enjoy the Soma juice? O Subduer of the wicked, O God, the ardent worshippers offered Thee libations in the past, and are offering today. Listen now, here to the lauds of the devotees and come near unto us.

II

See now coming, sending forth her rays, the shining Daughter of Heaven, the mighty one dispells the gloom of night that we may see, the friendly lady ushers in the light. O Sun and Moon, the settlers of the world, the subjects longing for light want to attain Ye! I too want to gain you for self-protection. Thou, giver of wealth and wisdom, visit and reach each and all of us. O Sun and Moon, please enjoy this sweet Soma juice prepared for you in day time, and bestow treasures, chariots, etc., upon him who offers it. O God, I pray Thee with Soma libation, let me the sacrificer not be angry at any sacrificial beast. Who would not beseech the Almighty One, who nourshes the univeres?

O Adhavaryu, let Soma juice flow, for Indra longs to drink of it. He, the slayer of foes, hath yoked together His horses and hath come nigh. O Mighty, Great God, fulfil the desire of great and small, for thou art rich in wealth and worthy of being called upon in every calamity. If I, O God who scatterest riches, were the lord of wealth ample as Thine own, I would give it to the saint and never to the sinner. Thou art, O God, subduer of all the wicked. Father art Thou, All-conquering, remover of sins, Thou art, O God, subduer of all the wicked. Father art Thou, All conquering, Remover of sins, Thou Victor of the vanquisher. In Thy might Thou stratchest beyond the mansions of the sky. The earthly region comprehends Thee not, O God. Thou, who hast waxed mighty over the whole universe, liberate us.

III

Prepared is the Soma drink, mixed with cowmilk and best grains,

whereto He has ever been accustomed. O divine Lord of the steeds, we invoke Thee with our sacrificial good deeds, forget not these our songs of praise in the ecstasies of Soma. O Lord, we have made a house for Thee to dwell. O much invoked One, dwell there with all Thy might to guard and increase us, and give us riches and jewels of jewels of learning, etc. O Lord, Thou cleavest clouds and settest free the arrested streams, controllest the clouds in the sky. Thou layest great mountains open while letting loose the torrents. O Lord, we laud Thee on the occasion of pressing Soma and dividing grains; O Almighty, give us ample wealth and prosperty, and under Thy mighty protection, may we be victorious. O Lord of ample wealth, we deserving wealth have grasped Thee by the right hand knowing that Thou art the Lord of the earth, cattle and valour, vouchsafe us wishfulfilling riches of many kinds.

Men call on the God through their lauds in strifes to tilt the decision in their favour. O Valiant One, grant us fame, and stalls full of cattle. Like birds of shining plumage, the learned seeking more knowledge, the sacrifice fond sages, approach God and implore Him to dispell the darkness of ignorance, Lord fill full their vision, and liberate them from the snares which entangle them. We gaze at Thee, O Lord, with intense longing in our hearts as on a mighty, golden-winged bird, soaring higher and higher, possessing wonderous resources, the envoy of God. In the begining of creation, God created the Sun, the womb of the present and future creations, and other similar shining worlds in the space. The wise use many matchless words for this Great Hero, most Mighty, Auspicious Energetic, Wise God, the Wielder of thunder.

IV

The innumerable Demons of darkness engulf the Moon on the night of Amavashya, but the mighty Lord lays down His weapons only after liberating the engulfed Moon and subduing the demons. Flying in fear from the threat of Demons of darkness, all the deities who were Thy friends deserted Thee, but Thou conquered all the foes. Now, behold God's high wisdom and greatness, how he who died yesterday is revived today. The vanished Moon is reborn and

runs her course through the stars of lunar mansion. O Indra, at Thy birth, Thou wast the only conqueror of the seven demons. Thou founded the hidden earth and heaven, and gave pleasure to the worlds. O God, Thou thunderer, I laud Thee with Vedic hymns, O Almighty, Eternal, most Wise, Excellent and Subduer of several foes.

O men, gain favour of the Lord, the Great God through offerings and devotions. O Lord, the Sustainer of the subjects, go forth to noble and learned men. We invoke Thee, Auspicious, Omniscient, the best Leader of men, Mighty, Slayer of foes, in this fight for protection the Bestower of riches, victory and Listener of our supplications. O wise men, pray and sing Vedic hymns to God to obtain wealth and knowledge. Invoke Him, who is the Creator of all the world, and listens to the prayers, which I, His faithful servant utter! God pours copious rain from the clouds in the firmament, fastened over the earth, and fills the kine with milk and the herbs with sap.

V

We call on God, Omniscient, the Conquerer of all, the Mighty One, the Wielder of thunderbolt, Giver of riches, Praised by deities, Pervading all, the most Agile, and present in the hearts of His devotees, for our weal. I invoke the God, invoked by many, the Rescuer, God the Helper easily invoked, the Hero who listens. May He accept our devotions. We worship Indra, the upholder of the thunderbolt in his right hand, Remover of calamities, the Mighty and Terrible to foes and Lord of bay steeds. We worship Indra, the Lord of thunderbolt, Bountous, Giver of blessings, the slayer of Vritra, the Great, Limitless, Mighty and the most Excellent. The man who fights against, with a desire to destroy us, deeming himself a hero or a giant, may be overthrown by us in the battle, O Lord, helped and strengthened by Thee.

He is Indra, whom men call upon when engaged in strife with the foe, whom poets praise. He is remembered by His subjects and lauded by the learned. O Indra, grant us nice viands and heroic progeny. O God, accept and enjoy our gifts, wax strong by our

hymns and rejoice in our oblation! Let us sing His praise in a ceaseless flow, who rains waters from the firmament. It is He who revolves the Earth and Heaven, like two wheels, fixed on either side of a car with an axle. May I incite Thee, O Friend towards friendship, far though Thou mayest beyond the rivers, May the disposer grant grand children for his father, radiant in this mansion with special lustre! Who yokes the vigorous and strong steeds of turbulant spirit into the pole of Order, bearing in their mouth no fodder? He with does so, shall enjoy his life for long.

O Lord, the possesser of knowledge and power of action, the Soma singersh hymns Thy praise. The chanters of the psalms laud Thee. The knowers of all the four Vedas extol Thee with reverence that men have for the head of their family. All the hymns extol the Lord, who is diffused in every direction like the ocean, the Supreme Charioteer, the Master of heroes, the Lord of strength and Protector of the Righteous. O Indra, drink this excellent, divine, exhilarating Soma juice. Here flow the streams of nourishing Soma to Thee at the place of sacrifice. O Indra, wonderous God, what wealth Thou hast not given us here in this world, give us the bounty filling full both Thy hands!

O Indra, the Mightiest, the Giver of prosperity, this Soma juice has been prepared for Thee. O Potent humbler of the foe, may it fill Thee with vigour as the Sun fills the world with his rays. O Indra come hither, with Thy knowledge, accept our lauds! O Indra, lover of the Vedic hymns, the prayers come to Thee fast like a charioteer. These Vedic prayers call upon and Mighty Indra, with pure Sama songs! May milk blent with Soma juice and praise gladden Him and He be gracious unto us. O most Wealthy, Rich in splendours and Illustrious, Soma is ready, Thy favoured drink, O Indra Libation's Lord!

II

O men, bring forth oblations to Indra, the God, Who is knower of all Who fain would drink, never lagging behind, swift moving and the Hero May the Great God, the mighty, residing in the inmost recess of the heart, the Sustainer of life, drive away the awful word

from our mind. O Mighty God, the Lord of mighty deeds, the Subduer of the wicked, Protector of the learned, we approach Thee again for favour and help even as we approach a car for aid. The learned man,amongst the respectable people, ranks the first for he acts like a wise father and through him God urges the people to contemplate and acquire knowledge. Where the man riding the chariots, drawn by swift and shining horses, reach and take delight in sweet Soma juice, there sacred rites are performed.

I glorify the Lord for your sake, who wrongs none, is the Leader of men, All-conquering, the Mightiest, the Wisest and the Best. We laud the Lord, the Almighty, Pervading all. May He sweeten our lives and prolong the days we have to live! We is much lauded by many people, the Lord, the Shatterer of forts, ever Young, the Wise, of Unmeasuredstrength, Sustainer of life and the Wielder of thunder.

III

O learned men, offer Indra, worshipped by the heroes, the Showerer of rains, the sacred Soma mixed with oblations and accompanied by Sama hymns. Indra invites you, complete the rites. Sing, sing your lauds, O men of learning, sing your songs of praise to God, our Sustainer and Stronghold. Let young children sing His glories, Yea, let them laud Him. We should laud the Omnipotent God, who being kind gives to the soul, that longs to get prosperity and the teaching which makes it grow and admirable. O men I call upon the Lord, the Ruler of all, the Master of unbending might, that He, as He is wont, may protect you and the chariots.

O man, even Indra, who is thine friend, he with the grace of God comes safe through strifes offered by the enemy, as he does overcome sins! O God of ample grace, widespread is Thy bounty. so good and liberal Giver, the knower of all, Doer of many great deeds, give us splendid wealth. When bright Dawn, with her light appears, all living beings start to stir, both four-footed and two, and round about flock the feathery birds from all the directions of heaven. The worlds which are there in the luminous realm of heaven, are there Vedas in vogue? Are Yajnas performed there? Is

old rites of Yajna prevalent there? We perform Yajna and offer lauds to the Gods through Sama hymns. The Vedic hymns occupy and important place in society and sacred observances, thy bear sacrifices to Gods.

IV

Men in accord, select Indra as their King and Lord, who Conquers all armies, is Fierce, Firm in the battle, Great destroyer, All-powerful, Stalwar and full of Vigour, I trust Thee, O Almighty. God, Most Brilliant, for Thou has destroyed the demon Vritra for the weal of mankind. Both Heaver and Earth fled unto thee for refuge, and Earth even trembled at Thy strength, Thundrer! Come ye all men, seek refuge unto Him, the Lord of Heaven, the only One, worshipped by all men and beings. He is the First and only One to whom all pathways lead. O Lord of ample wealth, lauded by many, we all are Thine, and having faith in Thy help, draw to Thee. None but Thou, O Song lover, shalt receive our prayers, as Earth lovers all her creatures, so welcome this our song! May our high praise sound forth the glory of Him, who is the Supporter of mankind, the Lord of ample wealth, who hath waxed mighty, much invoked with hymns, Immortal one whose laud is sung aloud every day!

O men, let your bliss-seeking minds, in unison, offer laud unto Him, the God, just as the wives embrace their beautiful wealthy and strong lords. O men, gladden with your songs the Gods, Ocean of wealth Showerer of happiness, Invoked by many in Vedic verses, whose good deeds spread like the rays of the Sun for the weal of mankind, Most Mighty and Intelligent, Bestower of wealth and Destroyer of foes. O learned man, honour well God, the showerer of happiness, the Pure Cause of all, under whom hundreds of planets and stars revolve. I as a devotee worship Him again and again and recite the lauds, the Allpervading, Moving everywhere with horse like speed and propitiated through hymns, for my saftey and protection. Filled with water encompassing all things that be wide, spacious, pleasant and beautiful in their form, the Heaven and the Earth by His decree, undecaying and rich in

germs, stand from each other apart. O Lord, like the Dawn, Thou has filled both Earth and Heaven with light. Thou art Mightier than the mighty, Great king of men, the Mother-goddess brought Thee forth, the divine mother gave Thee life, Sing praise for God, who gladdens all and dipels the darkness of ignorance. Let us, desiring help and protection call upon Him for friendship, the Mighty and Mainstay of His subjects.

V

O Lord, when Somas flow, Thou makest the sacrifice pure and grantest us evergrowing strength. Indeed Great art Thou. Sing forth to Him whom many men invoke, to Him whom many men laud. Worship the Mighty God with songs of praise! O Lord of the clouds, mountains, we sing for Thy delight which conquers all struggles. Thou art the Creator of this universe, All-pervading the most Beautilul and lauded by us all. O Omnipresent God, whatever immortality giving nectar exists either in Thee, or in the Yogis or in the Ida, Pingla and Shusmana, Thou art verity the source of all that. Come sacrificer and pour forth yet more libation, the highly gladdening drink. So praised He, the Hero, ever prospers us.

O learned men, pour out Somas, the sweet juice, for Him to drink. None but He gives bounteous gilts through His majesty. O men, come let us sing praise for Indra, the Hero who deserves the laud. He, with none to aid, overcomes all foes! O men, sing you a song of praise for God, the Giver of knowledge, the Great, Omniscient, the Creator of the Vedas. Sing a high song for Him, who is worthy of our adulations. He who alone bestoweth wealth on man, who giveth gifts, is God only, the potent Lord, whom none resist. Friends, let us sing a Vedic hymn for Him, the Conqueror of all but never conquered, the chastiser of the wicked, the Companion of men.

O Indra, thou slayest Vritra, I praise O God, Thy most high might for the sacrifice. O Indra, this Soma hath been pressed for Thee, drink of it. Thou showerer of rain and Remover of obstacles of Thy devotees, come unto us. O Indra, ever Conquering, Unconquerable, Dear, spread on all sides like a mountain, All- pervading, Lord of

Heavens! O mighty Indra, Thou perceivest the great joy arising from Soma drink, whereby Thou smitest down the demons that jow crave! O Gods, so mighty and learned, grant our sons and grandsons the lengthened terms of life that they may live long days!

O Indra, the Thunderer, Thou knowest how to avoid evil powers, just as he who knows the pitfalls and returns safe. Drive Ye Gods, disease and strife away, drive Ye away malignity! Keep us far removed from evils and sins. O Indra, Lord of steeds, may this Soma drink gladden Thee, just as a well-trained steed driven by an expert driver reaches the desired destination.

II

O Indra, from times immemorial, Thou art ever Rivellers and Leaderless. Thou seekest companionship through war! O friends, He who hath brought for us the best gifts, Him I praise for you, for protection and help. O learned men, come hither, fail not, stay not while marching onward, in a fit of rage Ye can tame even that which is firm! O Lord of herses, Lord of cows, Lord of Corn, Lord and Protector of Soma, come hither and drink of the juice of Soma.

Leamed persons, full of amity are akin by common ancestry, just as the rays of the Sun are to one another. O Indra, fetch us strength, fetch valour, All-knowing, Thou ever Active, fetch us a hero conquering in war! O Lord, worthy of praise, just as water is united with water, so we draw nigh unto Thee with longing and are satisfied. Just as the birds are drawn to nourishing food, so we come unto Thee desiring bliss and sing Thy laud aloud. O Thunderer, ever youthful, Wonderous, we call on Thee seeking help and protection.

III

Just as the bright rays moving along the Sun, suck up the savoury essences diffused in space, and cause the rejoicing and happiness among the creatures, so does the company of the Lord to the soul and its sense organs. O mighty, sovereign Lord, just as the Sun

dispels the clouds by his rays, so dost Thou drive away evil forces so that learned persons well versed in Vedas, may live in peace and by their spiritual powers drive advantage and help others to do likewise. We invoke Indra, our joy and strength, Destroyer of all the wicked, alongwith his subjects. We invoke Him alone for protection and help in battles whether great or small. O Indra, the thunderer, Thine alone is unconquered strength. Thou with Thy surpassing strength smitest to death, the wile enemy, which act lauds Thine glory alone! O Indra, go forward and be bold, Thy strength of conquering the enemy is unchecked. Like the Sun that shatters clouds and controls the waters, do Thou slay the foe, establishing Thine own sovereignty!

O Indra, when wars are on foot, Thous destroyest the enemy and givest booty to Thy friends and other brave men. Yoke Thy powerful bay steeds, humble the foe and make us affluent. O Indra, yoke quickly for us Thy bay steeds. Learned men, resplendent like the Sun, have praised Thee with their Vedic hymns. O learned men, may Ye enjoy all the pleasures and be popular among the people. O Indra, listen to our requests and be not hostile to us. When wilt Thou lead us to prosperity? Make the learned happy and prosper! Now, quickly yoke Thy steeds! The Moon, the giver of delight speeds along the airs in the sky. The lightnings of the bright golden rays cannot be appreciated by the ignorant. O King and subjects who are like the heaven and the earth mark this my hymn! O Ashvins, lover of sweet Soma the Seer is ready to laud Thee with Vedic hymns O Lovers of sweetness, listen to my song!

IV

O Agni, Refulgent and Immortal God, we kindle Thee. This glorious lustre of Thine shines in heaven. Give food and bliss to those who are thy devotees and sing Thy laud. O Agni, we choose Thee as our Hota or officiating priest. Thou art Pure, Lustrous, present everywhere and waxeth great with oblations. O heavenly, highborn and glorious Dawn awaken us today to ample opulence even as thou didest awaken us before! O Great god, grant us mind full of delight, energy and mental powers. Let man joy, in Thy

love, O God, as kine do in pasteurage! Great Indra, Lord of shining bay steeds. Handsome, being frerce to the wicked and formidable to the foes Learned, Mighty, who waxeth strong with His acts of wisdom and taking of nourishing food. He grasps the iron thunderbolt in His hand for our prosperity.

O Indra, he alone who knows full well how to yoke the steeds would mount the mighty car containing all material of war and other things. Now, Indra, yoke your fine steeds in the chariot! I praise that Agni, whom as their home all resort. The kine seek Agni as their stall, the swift-footed steeds as their stable, and the learned men as their refuge. O Agni, give food to those who sing Thy praise. O learned men, no distress and sin affect the mortal man whom Aryaman, and Mitra guide, and Varuna, through deep love, leads beyond his foes!

V

O God of tranqulity, shower bliss upon a friendly, mighty and opulent man! O Tranquil Lord, for the attainment of power, knowledge and wealth, rain thy blessing through Thy forbearance. O Discharger of obligations remove our foes like lust, etc., which hinder our path! O God, Thou art the mighty Ocean in which all beings take delight. O Sire of all the deities, purify all the hearts! O God, ever Pure and Mighty, Thou purify our conduct for obtaining power and wealth! May the Benign, Opulent, Wise God, purify us in the lap of actions, for the acquisition of wealth and happiness.

O God, in Thy Righteous Sovereignty, all are equal, following in Thy wake we realize Thee in the heart and enjoy bliss and happiness. O Purifer, grant us riches! Who are such bleessed, moral and kind hearted men as living in unity and dwelling together? They are men dedicated to sacrificial acts and contemplation. O Effulgent Agni, we adore Thee with our humble deeds and prayers. Thou art our bearer of oblations to the Gods like a horse and mind, O Auspicious! O God, the Primordial cause, Pre-eminent, Great and mighty Protector, Thou purify us!

I

O Giver from all sides, onurish us from all sides, Thou whom as the strongest we entreat! This Brahaman, Brahaman Benign in all seasons, renowned and named as Indra, I praise. The knowers of the Vedas, exalting Indra increase His strength so that He might kill the serpent of sin. Man use Thou, O God, as a vehicle to attain speedy liberation. O God, invoked by many, a man enlightened with knowledge uses Thee as lustrous protection! A man not devoted to charity acquires not wealth nor the cherished desires. He who longs for wealth to be given in charity, attains riches and fame.

The Vedic verses are ever pure and all-supporting, the Gods ever free from stain and blemish. Dawn, with all thy beauty come! The kine with udders full of milk, follow thy path. O God, may we, dwelling in spiritually rich place, increase our wealth and meditate on Thee! The learned Ritvij men, chant the praise for God, who is Mighty, Famed in the Vedas and supports them. Chant aloud the song the praise of God, the Subduer of lust etc., the song that He accepteth.

II

Agni, the Resplendent, who bears our oblation, hath come in His lustrous car. O God Agni, All pervading, he Thou our nearest Firiend, yea, our Protector, our kind liberator and worthy of our adoration! Of all the Gods, the Great God, lustrous like the Sun, giveth us wonderous wealth of knowledge. O the Best Worshipped God, Thou settles all, and so settle me as well! The Dawn drives away the darkness of her sister Night, and maketh her retrace her steps. Similarly, Thou God, remove the darkness of our ignorance!

O God, may our souls and sense organs obtain pleasure from all these existing worlds! Just as the streams flow on their way, so let bounties flow from Thee! May we with this prayer obtain God-given strength and enjoy happiness for hundred winters with heroic sons! May thou Indra along with Sun and Varuna, grant us nourishing and rich harvests! God is King of all the world.

III

The Mighty and Great Indra enjoyed Soma juices and barley-brew at the Trikadrukeshu Yajna performed in three days, with Vishnu. Nourished and exulted by it, He did many a mighty work. So this true and divine Soma served this true God Indra. This Brilliant God, Light of the learned, the Seer, sends forth His rays, spotless, lustrous and pure and thereby causes day-light in various worlds. O Indra, come near to us who have astrayed from Thee, just as the King, the protector of his righeous subjects goes to his seat of judgement, or just as the Sun, the protector of the earth, reaches the Yajnas. We invoke Thee as sons do their sire, with gifts and Soma drink, that we may acquire wealth and power, O most Adorable. I call on Thee aloud through songs, O Mighty, resistless, Opulent and Possessing many virtues. Thou are most Liberal, Thunder-armed. Worshipworthy and Omnipresent; make our pathways easy and full of riches and knowledge. Let my prayers be heard. Mentally I place the omniscient Gon in my heart and pray for the divine strength. I also invoke the soul and the vital breath (Prana), They both help in attainment of the Divine Light. All our thoughts, actions and holy hymns go forward on their way unto Him. O men, well versed in Vedas, let your praises born in hymns go forth to the God, the Mighty, the Holiest, the Master of all, the Omniscient, just as lightnings flash for the clouds. Just as the Sun destroys darkness with his lustrous rays, so dies the hero subdue all his foes with the help of his alles. God, the Almighty, All-pervading encompasses all things existing in seven airs of atmosphere; I praise this God, Creator of Heaven and Earth, most Wise, Almighty, Beloved of all, Giver of the riches, Whose splendour is sublime, Whose light shines brilliantly in creation, Who is Handsome and golden-handed.

Agni I regard as the Munificent, Liberal donor, Acceptor what is offered with love and reverence, who knows all that exists like a sage, endowed with wisdom. The Refulgent God, who performs Yajna with high knowledge and reverential devotion, who shines like the clarified butter (ghee) when put in the blazing fire. O almighty God, the Revolver of the sun, Thou art praised by the

ancient learned men for Thy noble deeds. All the human efforts are centred on Thy brilliance, and it is Thou who bestows gifts of Prana, and strength. With Thy power Thou gets through all the substances and conquers all. Thou art the Master of unlimited powers, wisdom, bravery and foodgrains. May Thy blessings fall on you!

IV

O Soma, the pleasure arising out of foodgrains, etc., created by Thee, is obtained by the men of the entire Earth. Thou art the source of happiness and Thy great renown is spread in the heavens. O Soma, flow in streams with Thy most sweet and gladdening power, pressed for the use of Indra. O Mighty, Nourishing and Satisfying flow in streams! Flow onward Soma, Thou slayer of the wicked, protector of the Gods and delightful to all. Milch-kine are lowing, the three Vedas are being recited, the Soma flows making a loud noise.

O Soma, Thou extremely sweet, flow and manifest Thyself to seat at the place of sacrifice. O Mighty, mountain born residing in the clouds, nourished by the rains, Thou hath been pressed for rapturous delight! O Gold-hued, embodiment of delight,bestower of strength, flow on in streams for Vayu and other Gods to drink. Soma, the Mountain dweller, pressed through a sieve in pure vessel, in joyful and bounteous to all. Soma, the Sage of heaven, the wise, pressed between the hands by the priests, giveth joy and strength.

The rapture-giving Soma, pressed to flow, bestows wealth and fame upon the assembled people. Just as the waves of ocean, skilled in song flow forward; just as the buffalo go to woods, so does the Soma juice flow in streams. O Soma flow on, fulfiller of our desires, mighty, glorify us among the folk, drive all our foes away! O Purifier, bestower of happiness, Thou resplendent, we call on Thee, the fulfiller of our desires Soma, the beloved of the learned, enlightener, flows in streams as do the steeds of a chariot.

Potent, brilliant and swift Soma is offered in libation with a desire

to possess kine, horses and heroic sons. God, flow Thou, working with makind, may Thy gladdening juice reach Indra, and Vayu, as Thy law ordains! The Pure Soma, has generated the wonderous light in the firmament, like the thunder, common to all human beings. The gladdening and sweet Soma flows on in streams with Vedic hymns and reaches Gods! Reposing on the wave of the mind, lived by many, and bearing the soul, the Soma flows on the streams around.

I

The Gods resort to Soma, the slayer of the foes, the beautiful, inspier of action, the best-descended. Soma, the ever active, the giver of wisdom, hath overthrown all the foes. The learned adorn the Sage with holy hymns. Pressed and filtered Soma, hath been poured into the jar. Soma is flered to Indra. Just as a powerful steed, yoked in a chariot, goes forward in the battle, so flows the Soma juice from two pressboards to a sieve. Just as the impetuous, brilliant unwearied rays of the Sun come forth and drive away the dark covering of night, so does Soma sweep away the wicked.

Soma, Thou flowest in streams of happiness, chasing away the foes, giver of wisdom and joy, drive Thou the goddess folk away! O Soma, flow forth with that stream wherewith Thou hath illumined the Sun and urged the actions of men. Flow forth Soma, Thou who helped Indra, in slaying Vritra who encompassed and hampered the mighty waters. O Soma, flow forth with that stream wherewith revelling in Thy wild delights, the Sun destroyed the 108 castles of the demons of drought. O Divine flow forth, speed through the sieve, who giveth wealth and food from all sides!

II

The greemish-yellow mighty Soma, beautiful as Mitra in looks, gleams and flashes with the Sun, and flows roaring. O Divine we choose today in this Yajna, Him, who giveth protection, happiness, the Mighty one who is desired by many. O Adhvaryu filter the Soma juice, pressed with stones, purify it for the enjoyment of Indra. The pressed, purified and invoked Soma, that which flows

with speed in streams, giveth bliss and removeth sins. Soma, give us wealth in thousands, heroic strength, keep secure all renown of us!

Soma grants a new life to the old through rejuvenatio. Soma, the self-effulgent like the Sun, is prepared by the people. O Divine, so bright, flow forth with a roar into the wooden vessels! O Soma, Thou virtuous, giveth strength, happiness and infusest excellent deeds. Thou effulgent showerer of rains ordainest laws. O Soma, sought after and made pure by Adhvaryus and priests, Thou flow forth in streams for food, grains and joy of contemplation. Come Thou with gleam and lustre to those who call upon Thee. O mighty Soma, favouring Gods and the sacrifices, flow on in streams to protect us. The great Soma, increases in strength through Yajna and showers bliss like rains. He is effulgent, benebolent, purifier developer of intellect and approachest us for lifty friendship. O Soma Thou art realized by the learned men. Thou manifests Thyself and flows on in streams for our wealth, grains and knowledge. Soma streaming or drives away our foes and sinners and marches on to Indra.

III

Soma, flowing in streams, purifying, resplendent, deep like a well, watery in form, residing the place of sacrifice approachest us. The best of sacred gifts, Soma, the benefactor of mankind, pressed out with stones, should be sprinkled all around. Just as the people live in a city, so does Soma pervade all, eclipsing the ever bright rays of the Sun. Thou art expressed in lonely place through contemplation. Just as the Ocean is full of water, so art Soma with the juice of the stalk. O sweet One, giver of joy. remover of inactivity, flow into the wooden vessel for the enjoyment of Gods. Pressed out by Adhvaryus, the swift flowing Soma. goes in greenish yellow streams like an exceleent steed in a joyous course.

O Soma, every day Thy friendship hath been my delight. Many pains birth follow me, please help me overcome these, and grant me salvation! O Pure, Refulgent, when sought for, Thou approachest in rich flow, yellow like gold, much invoked and

abundant into the ocean-like vessel with a voice raised loud. The rapturous Soma, the gladdening drink, flows into the vessel from above and spreads ecstast around. O most wise, pure, watchful, conscious, knowing all, please protect us from all sides with Thy excellent virtues, and fill our sacrifices with sweetness. The expressed, rapturous Soma flows in numerous streams for Gods. Men prepare it in bundance, pure and bright. Manifest and flow on in streams, O Soma, Thou giver of corns, and joys. Thou art a mighty ocean full of happiness, come of Thy worshippers! The purified souls, immersed in bliss, attain salvation through control of mind, and horselike restless sense organs. They abandon desires and overcome their sense of egoism.

IV

Expressed and purified by the priests, Soma fills the vessel with swift flowing streams. Just as a powerful courser led by reins, is taken to the battlefield, so art Thou taken by the sages to the sacred place of sacrifice, where Thou growest stronger. God, the Creator of speech, the 'Friend of the holy, ever pure and purifying, God of the Gods, wishing the world ever well, the Preacher of the Vedas, declares the generations and geneology of the Gods in the beginning of creaction. The sages preach the three Vedas in the world, the revealed truth and wisdom of God. Just as the cows go to the cowherd, so the hymns of praise come to Soma, ever longing. Just as a peasant goes to a cattle-shed and milks the cows, so goes Soma roaring to the Gods in the sky, expressed, and made pure in a sacrifice by the priests. God Soma, the Father of hymns, the Father of Earth and Heaven, of Agni, the Generator of the Sun, the Father, who begot Indra and Vishnu, is realized by the sacrifices.

Lauded in Vedic hymns, the Dweller in the triple world, Fulfiller of desires, Adorable, the Cause of rainss, Giver of life and longevity, All pervading Lord of treasures, the God showers his blessings. Guardian of all beings, Creator of creatures, Mighty, Roaring like an ocean, expressed by the stones, Soma, waxeth strong in the proximity of sacrifice. Aloud flows the green- yellow Soma juice

from the wooden vessel, into the sacrificial fire accompanied by Vedic hymns. Ye learned men, meditate on the Soma sacrifice and Vedic speech. O Soma, the embodiment of sweetness, flow forth into the wooden vessels, Thou most gladdening, enrobed in waters, strength-giving and excellent drink for Indra!

V

The hero served with Soma, goes forth in front of the cars-seeking spoils, and thereby mightily pleases his army. He declares his benervolent behests for his friends and takes on himself the formidable onslaughts of the foes. O Soma, Thy streams flow forth, when being pressed and purified. O Pure, Thou refulgent, fillest thy devotees with bliss as does the Sun with his rays the heaven. O men, sing laud to the Gods for obtaining wealth, sing loudly and offer the Soma libation. Let Soma flow forth through the sieve into vessel! O men, Soma the progenitor of heaven and earth, offered in oblation and urged on, goes forth like a chariot to Indra sharpening his weapons and holding treasures in his hands. Pressed by the ten fingers of a comtemplative priest, Soma the gold-hued, resplendent like the Sun, pours forth quickly into the vessel like a fleet mighty course.

When the sparkling waters strive to cleanse Some as through he were a courser, and the voices of the singing devotees emulate one another to laud it, Soma flows forth in his wisdom into a vessel as a cowherd goes to stable of cows in order to increase and multiply them. The mighty Soma, enrobed in water, giving happiness, flows forth, infusing strength and joy to Indra. He quells the wicked and slays the enemy, Lord of all, who fulfills desires. O Soma, Pure and purifying, pour forth, flow onward into the oceanlike vessel. Soma, the mighty, born of waters, performed a great deed when he gave strength to Indra and generated light in the Sun. Hastening like flood of waters our lauds go forth to Soma. To him the reach with humble adoration, and longing, enter him who longs to meet him.

I

O friends, for protection of Soma juice, the rapturous drink, drive

ye away the long-tongued dog! This Soma, the Lord of wealth, of strength, and purifying, the sustainer of all beings, illumines both the Heaven and earth Soma, the excellently sweet juice, spreading joy, flows on to Indra. May our libations of Soma reach the Gods! For us flow the Soma streams, pure, benevolent, friends, knowers of the path and the best knowers of our weal. O Indu, shower on us the riches, carved by hundreds, most splendid, thousandfold surpassing light.

The pure souls sing lauds to Indra's dear friend, as in the morning of its life, the mothers lick the new-born calf. Soma protects the bold and heroic as a soldier draws his mighty bow for his beloved king. The drops of flowing Soma weave a bright and colourful raiment, amidst songs, for the God. The sages through the sieve purify, the golden hued Soma, beloved of all, who with delighful juices courses to the Gods. O learned men, give dakshina to the Adhvaryus, and other priests who press Soma juices out, without being asked, let not Yajna suffer, but drive away the dog!

II

Benevolent and great Soma manifests himself through life-giving rains. He, the mighty and far-seeing hath now mounted the mighty Sun's car, moving in every direction. Let our streams of Soma juice, pressed out flow forth to the Gods! May our enemies, the atheist be ever wanting, and our holy prayers succeed. This exceedingly sweet, most beautious of the beautious, mighty as Indra's thunderbolt, the Soma reveals himself in the vessel by its clamour. Just as the milch-cow shed milk in streams, so do the juices of Soma flow forth in abundance. Soma, the refined reaches Indra. Soma gains the vessel through hundred paths like a youth who moves with youthful maids. Soma, the joy of Gods, pressed by men, sustainer of heavens, the green-hued, the mighty, flows forth in streams like a courser.

The giver of intelligence, the Lord of days, dawns and heavens, life of the rivers, being offered in libation, effulgent having entered the vessel with toar, goes skyward. Having waxed strong in Yajna, He purifies the four, i.e., earth, heaven, space and cardinal points. The

seven celestial milch-kine pour the milk for Soma from high heaven. Flow forth to Indra, O Soma well pressed. Let sickness stay afar from us along with wickedness. Let not the double-tongued men delight Thy juice, let thy devotees prosper here in the world! The golden-hued, wonderous, majestic like a king, roating Soma delights the sense-organs. Being filtered and purified, Thou overflowing the vessel, ascends high in the heaven like a mighty hawk. Just as the milch-kine yield milk to their calf, so does sweet Soma flow forth unto Gods. The priests cleanse Soma with waters, blend it with honey and relish its pressing. They revel, hold and taste the gladdening juice.

III

Let these gladdening gold-hued Soma juices, go to Indra and attain light of heaven. O tranquil one, ever vigilant, flow on for Indra, and shower strength that attains light of the heaven! O friends, come, sit down, sing lauds to Him who purifies, adorn Him for Yajna as a child is decked with gifts. O friends, sing hymns to Soma, the purifier, for your joy sweeten him with honey, like a child who is pleased with offering of gifts etc. Soma, shedding lustre in the sacrifice, dear to men like a child, is far more excellent than any other object, however, dear. O Soma, flow forth in streams for Gods. Thou, sweet and mighty one, come and reside in our vessel!

Soma the pure and purifier, in waves flows on through the sieve of wool, and roars to the accompaniment of Vedic songs. O mighty Soma flow unto us and grant wealth of milch-kine steeds and oxen! The Vedic hymns sing Thy praise for our weal, We know Thee through these Vedic verses. Gold-hued Soma, overcoming all obstacles, flows rapidly through the wool. O Lord shower heroic renown on Thy worshippers! Purifying the sweet Soma flows, the Vedic verses in seven metres praise Thee aloud!

IV

Flow for Indra, O Soma, Thou so excellent, work-inspiring, blissful adorable, sweet, mighty and effulgent! Lord of the corns, friend of the learned, God, grant us splendid wealth and glory, remove the

cask of clouds! O sacrificing priests! express and pour Him again and again, who is adorable, fast as steed, cause of rains, swims in water and urges light to spread! He is the showerer of bliss, comes in thousand streams, milks the heaven, the Lord of all kinds of riches. He, who is Lord of food and wealth, friend of Gods, giver of handsome bodies and glories, should be invoked.

O beloved, most holy and effulgent God, Thou alone leads the learned to salvation. He floweth forth through the wool, in streams, the gladdening juice, sporting like the waves on water. He who throws open the strong prison of clouds in the heaven for the beams of light to shine forth, multiplies the kine and horses through copious rains, the conqueror of all. May He remove all our obstacles like a hero in armour.

Aranyak Kanda

I

O Indra, the most Mighty, thunderer, equipped with weapons, handsome, sustainer of earth and heaven, grant us desire-fulfilling food and wealth. He is the Lord of men, all that is animate and inanimate, and all sorts of wealth. He giveth the charitably disposed souls the comfortable means of life. May He grant us desired wealth! He Self-effulgent, Handsome and Wonderous, provides the Charitably disposed with happiness and bliss. O mighty, Refulgent Lord, cut asunder all our three kinds of bondage so that being free from sin, we may acquire bliss in obedience to Thy Law! O Lord of Tranquility, Sustainer, Purifier, may be with Thy help, attain desired fruits through our worthy actions!

O God, may all my desires be fulfilled by Thy grace! May He, the most holy, giver of wealth, worthy to be invoked in Yajna, appear unto us O God, grant us all the wealth and food of the people. We want to divide all these among ourselves equitably. O men, I existed prior to Gods, I am the showerer of true elixir. He, who teaches My divine knowledge, is the benefactor of mankind. He, who teaches My divine knowledge, is the benefactor of mankind. He, who does not impart my divine knowledge to other, is destroyed by Me, the Sustainer of all.

II

O Lord, Thou preservest this sparkling milk in white, black and red kine. He illuminates the Sun with light. Finally all things dissolve into the womb of Him. He sustains all the worlds, is the Centre of all might; the wicked are killed by His might and He is the source of all. God alone with His Law, keeps the Sun and Moon interconnected. The same God Chastiser and Self-effulgent. O Almighty God, Invincible, defend us with Thy unconquerable safeguards in battles great and small. O Almighty God, this sparking Soma is for Thee. Thou reside in the heart of Thy devotees! O God of opulent wealth, Eternal, when Thou comest in the heart of devotee to remove the darkness of ignorance, then Thou increasest the bliss of the Earth and sustainest the heaven!

III

O All-pervading, Lord of all that exists, increase in me spiritual Lord Chastiser of the proud, may we attain powers and knowledge of all kinds, which shower happiness. Thou art Perfect, grant the eternal soul beatitude in the light and delight of spiritual knowledge. O God, Thou has created all these herbs, the water and kine like cattle. Thou hast expanded the heavens with its worlds, and hast removed darkness with light. Oberisence to Thee, O Lord, Refulgen, Omnipresent, Illuminator of the Yajna, Adorable in all seasons, Giver to all, Possessor of all beautiful and wonderous objects! O God, Thy subjects on this Earth regard Thy name Om as best of the Vedic speech expressed in tweentyone kinds of metres. These subjects knowing this, laud Thee, and the Vedic verses appear glorious with Thy praise.

Just as some waters reach and mingle in the ocean, the others simply manage to reach near, and still some others merge into the ocean, in the form of a river, so do, O God, most Effulgent, Preserver of actions! these Vedic, words reach unto Thee. Night, the giver of rest and sleep to the entire would, is here around us. Now Dawn hath come, scattering away darkness with her light. May our speech nobly utter the adorable glory of the Showerer of

all joys, Effulgent, All pervading Lord! May our pure intellect laud Thee, the All controlling, Omniscient God, just as the newly created sacrificial fire obtains gladdening Soma.

O all learned men, the God, the Earth and Heaven, listen to my prayer! May I never speak unpleasant words for Him, and being in His closest proximity enjoy happiness! May the Earth and Heaven grant me opulence, may Indra and Brihaspati grant me fame! May I attain splendour! May these never abandon me! May I be the proud speaker in the learned assembly! I relate the heroic deeds of Indra, by which He the Thundrer, destroys the castles of clouds and makes water flow. He scatters the clouds asunder and causes streams to flow forth. I am Agni, by birth I emit light of knowledge, ghee delights me, elixir is in my mouth. I sustain all that exists, in three ways. I am the basis of space, ever effulgent and all best objects am I. The All- pervading Agni guards the orbits of both the moving Earth and the Sun. He guards the gladdening Yajna of the Gods.

IV

O God, Effulgent, Foremost, with Thy grace the tongue in the mouth eats and moves. Thou alone grantest us food, wealth, milk and light to see. O God, it is with Thy grace that spring is pleasant, the summer is pleasant, the rainy season is pleasant, the autumn is pleasant, the winter is pleasant, and the cool season is pleasant. The Omnipotent God hath a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. He, All-pervading, transgresses the whole Universe. The three-fourths of the God, remains above and aloof from the world, while with the one-fourth He creates and dissolves the would again and again. Pervading the all animate and inanimate objects, He sustains every thing.

God is the source of the past, present and future universe, nay He is greater than this universe. God is the Lord of all that grows and the final salvation. God is the Creator and Lord of the universe. He, remaining aloof creates the Earth, creatures, villages and cities. O All-pervading, Creator of the Earth and Heaven, and all that exists in them, I know Thee as excellent Guardian. Thou overextendest

this Earth and limitless Space. May Thee liberate us from sins and sufferings, and grant happiness. O creator of the wonderful sun, the learned sing Thy laud in Vedic hymns. Let our souls be in touch with the light of gold, the light of the Sun and the light of Brahman. O God, the Lord of this universe, grant us that might wherewith we may overcome our foes. Grant us abiding wealth and food according to our actions. Make us lethal to our enemies and sins! O kine, in various beautious forms, may Ye ever remain with calves and bulls, yielding milk morning and evening! May this Earth be your extended pasturage, waters fit for your drinking, and thus you be always happy!

V

O God, the Giver of longevity and Purifier of our lives, give us energy and food. Drive away from us the dog-like wicked persons. God, the most Effulgent, lords over all the shining heavenly bodies. He creates and inspires fire, water and wind, and is the soul of all animate and inanimate things. He sustains and pervades the Earth, Heaven and Space. The mother Earth moves round her father, the Sun. The lustre of the Sun moves up and between the Earth and the Heaven along with the wind. The Sun, far greater than the Earth, illuminates the Heaven.

Stars and nights disappear at the appearance of the Sun, so the thieves of mind take to flight in the presence of the light of knowledge. The light-emiting and colour-producing rays of the Sun enable all men to behold, like blazing fires. O Sun, illuminest all shining objects! O Sun, Thou shinest before the Gods, the Earth and the whole world in order to make all see everything. O Pure and the Remover of all calamities; Thou lookest upon all worlds with compassion, as we look upon Thee as our Guardian and Nourisher! O God, the Universal Spirit pervading all, Thou illuminest all the regions and creates days and nights. Thou seest the actions of all creatures as Thou art Omniscient! O Illuminator, Omniscient God, as seven kinds of rays cause to see the resplendent Sun in this beautiful world, so it is the Mantras composed in seven kinds of Vedic metres that make us to attain

Thee.

Mahanamnyarchika

O All-knowing Indra, direct us on the right path, O Pervading all subjects, reach us ho to attain our goal! O Lord of opulent wealth and wisdom, most Conscious, grant us learning, etc., with these lauds! O All-pervading like the rays of the Sun, equip us with learning and wisdom, Thou art Lord of food and fame, the most Mighty, Adorable. Be pleased, Thou Lord, Destroyer of the wicked, the Wielder of the thunderbolt. Grant us spiritual might and opulence, O most Adorable! May Thou ever be blissful! O most Heroic amongst the heroes, the most Adorable, equipped with weapons, most Charitable amongst the rich, urge us to laudable actions for wealth. O Lord of learning, Effulgent like the Sun, Omniscient God, lead us on righteous path. We praise Him alone.

The Almighty God lords over all. We call upon Him, the Unconquerable Hero for our protection. May He take us safe beyond the enemy, so that the truth, the Yajna and the Vedas prevail. We devotees invoke the Unconquerable Conqueror, the Lord of opulence for our protection. May He sweep away our foes. May He completely annihilate our enemy. O Eternal thunderer, grant us bliss, establish us in Thy felicity. O Mighty, Thy nourishment is alone praiseworthy, because Thou alone controllest all. O God, Slayer of the wicked, laudable, we praise Thee. He, the Mightiest, Learned, Friend to all, Blissful and without a second, pervades the Earth and all other worlds.

O Refulgent and Illuminating. Thou art the same as related earlier! O God, Thou art the same as mentioned before! verily O God, Thou art the same as described earlier! O Nourisher, Thou art the same as described before! O Gods, Ye art all as described before!

Uttararchika/Part Second

O men, sing forth to God, the Purifier! The learned and sedate men, God-loving, blend milk and Soma together for attainiment of God. O God, Thou shower happiness on our cattle, happiness on our progeny, happiness on our steeds, people herbs and plants! The Soma juices, blent with milk sparkles with light. Like a strong

courser, roused and sent forth to battle, like the warrior raised to action, the Soma flows forth with speed. Soma, the awakener of intellect, waxing strong in sacrifice, illumines the objects, like the Sun! The streams of Soma, mighty and wise are poured forth, like the steeds issuing from the stable. The fingers of the Ritvij-men purify the sweet Soma in the Vat. The streams of poured Soma reach the vessel like the milch-kine reaching their shed. They reach the place of sacrifice. O mighty Agni, we kindle and blaze Thee with fuel and ghee. Thou abide in my heart to remove the darkness of ignorance! O Agni, Thou winnest for us great heroic strength and high glory. O Gods Varuna and Mitra pour nourishment on our pasturagie, pour forth sweetness in our atmosphere! Varuna and Mitra gladdened by lauds, growing mighty through Yajna, masters of all, activate noble deeds. O Gods, lauded by Vedic songs, sit in the sacred seats of sacrifice, and enjoy the Soma drink.

O Indra come and drink of this Soma juice, expressed for Thee. Come, occupy this sacred seat! Let Thy long-maned by steeds carry Thee here. Pray come and listen to our prayers! We the priests engaged in sacrifice, invoke Thee with Thy friend, O Soma drinkers, with our Soma offerings. May both Indra and Agni, pervading the Space, urged by our Vedic hymns, come to our sacrifice to enjoy the Soma juice! Come Ye Gods, friends of the soul, and drink this streaming juice! I invoke Indra and Agni, who favour the wise, may They come and sate themselves with the drink! O Soma of heavenly birth, the people here on earth enjoy thy raptures and glory by drinking thee. May the Holy one, giver of wealth and foods unto us, flow to Indra, Varuna and Marut, adorable and worthy of our Yajna. We adore Thee O God, desiring to obtain all the wealth and foods and their equitable distribution amongst us! O Soma, enrobed in waters, purifying all, thou manifests thyself. Thou art lustrous and giver of wealth and happiness. The learned and holy man milks the sweet, excellent, divine, and pure Soma. Thereby he obtains the heavenly Soma juice. O Soma, flow forth and seat thee on the sacred grass! Cleanesed and purified by the priests, speed forward. Just as a spirited steed is led by reins, so thou art taken to the sacred seat by the priests, being made sparkling and pure! Thou, well equipped

with arms, guardian of the homes, averter of the evils, father and begetter of Gods, mighty, the sustainer of heaven and earth, flows borth in streams!

Just as the unmilked kine low to their calves, so do we invoke Thee aloud, O Lord of animate and inanimate objects and All- knowing! None other like Thee has ever been, nor ever will be. We, men of learning, desiring to obtain kine and horses, praise and invoke Thee! In what manner will He become our friend? With what might, action and conduct? Through wisdom wilt Thou be won over, the ever waxing strong! What excellent and gladdening thing will cause thee burst open the fortresses of the foe? Verily, it is the juice! Do thou, O God, be guardian to thy friends who laud thee for a hundred year! Just as kine low to their calves, so we call aloud upon God, with praises, who is handsome subdues foes and takes delight in Soma juice. O God, grant us soon, one who is bounteous giver, handsome, lord of the armies, nourisher like the clouds, rich in corn, kine, other cattle, might and foods! O priests, I tell ye, recite aloud the Brihar Sama for the Yajna, praise God, the Giver of riches, like Children praising their fore-father! He, who is adorable, untouched by passions, firm, unconquerable by the foes, grants him wealth and food honourably, who sings His praise and presses Soma for the Yajna. Flow forth thou sweet Soma in streams, expressed for Indra to lrink! Subduer of the wicked, pervading the world, reaching the place of acrifice, Soma hath poured into the golden vat. The best amongst the lrinks, adorable, slayer of the foes, the Soma giveth wealth even to the princes.

Flow forth, thou Soma most sweet, inspiring, gladdening juice, for Indra! Having drunk deep of the divine Soma, Indra waxeth strong, wise and spirited, as a strong and speedy steed runs to the battle! May these, golden-hued, well pressed Soma juices reach the mighty Indra in heaven! This Soma, so well pressed, arouses Indra for conquering the battle. Gladdened by this Soma, Indra, equipped with mighty weapons, wins the foes in war. For protection of the juice, the inspiring drink, drive away, ye friends, the long-tongued dog! Like a speedy horse, the Soma, well pressed and purified, flows forth on all sides. The Priests attend Soma, the unassailable, with prayer and devotion. They prepare it for the sacrifice,

bounteous, mighty, farsighted, ever youthful and lustrous Soma, Soaring high, hath now reached the mighty chariot of the Sun, which moves in every direction.

We sing to Agni, in every Yajna for acquiring strength. Let us laud the Almighty, Omniscient God, a well beloved friend unto us. He the Almighty, the Protector of our lives, the Guardian, is our Lord! May He defend us in battles and grant us strength! O Agni, come and grow strong with this Soma drink! I sing forth many songs of praise to Thee! wherever Thou applies Thy mind, there is created a dwelling place. O Agni, let not thy splendour ever harm our eyes and other sense organs! O Lord of us all, accept our devotion! O Peerless one, we call on Thee seeking protection and help. O Indra, we seek thy refuge in all our actions. Thou art subduer of our foes, heroic, effulgent and splendid. We thy friends, have therefore chosen Thee as our succourer. As waters follow waters, we come unto Thee, O Indra, with desires. Just as the ocean swells with rivers so we increase Thy might every day with our hymns, O thunderer!

O men, invite Indra, the conqueror, the most bounteous, the giver of wealth, to a drink of Soma with a hymn. He is Indra, praised by many, much invoked, leader of song and renowned of old. Indra, the most active, the giver of wealth and might, and fruits of our actions, binds all with the law. Sing ye friends to Indra, the Lord of bay steeds, the enjoyer of Soma juice. Let us glorify the Lord for acquiring wealth, as men eulogise a noble man, charibably disposed to gain gifts. O good God Indra, Thou grantest us wealth and kine, wisdom and gold, the Lord of boundless power. Indra, we, thy devoteed friends, sing thy lauds. The wise also praise Thee with their songs of Chastiser of the wicked, none else have I praised in my Yajna of actions, for I gain light of knowledge through Thy lauds. The ever active wise men, never desiring passivity, merge into Thy bliss. Let our hymns be loud to Indra, the enjoyer of Soma. Let poets sing his praise. We call upon Indra to drink of Soma, in whom all glories rest, in whom the seven officiating priests rejoice. The learned men expand the Yajna during the three days of Triktuka ceremony. Let our hymns aid to prosper it. Hie Thee hither, O Indra, and drink of this Soma,

pressed and made pure for Thee! O mighty rayed, scatterer of the mass of clouds, adorable with hymns, for Thy enjoyment hath this juice been prepared. Thou art invoked, O Sun!

O mighty armed Indra, gather for us with Thy right hand, manifold nutritious food and wealth! We know thee, Thou art mighty in deeds, mighty in granting favours! Hero, when thou wouldest give the gifts, neither the sages nor mortal men can restrain Thee like a fearful bull. The Soma being prepared for Thee, I pour it in oblation. Sate Thee by drinking deep of it. Let not the fools and those who mock at Thee, beguile Thee. Leave not the enemy of the Vedic hymns! Here in the Yajna, the learned cheer Thee with Soma juices for food and wealth. Drink to thy fill like a white deer drinking from a lake! Drink of it to thy heart's content, we offer it, O fearless God! Pressed out with stones, cleansed by men and purified through the sieve of wool, Soma, juice is like a courser bathed in rivers. Just as cooked barley is sweetened by mixing it with milk for the kine, so we have prepared this excellent Soma for Thy joy. O Lord of opulence, this juice hath been pressed out with much exertion for Thee. Drink of it, O lover of hymns! O Indra, enjoy this juice which gladdens thee so much. Let it cheer Thee up! Let the juice enter both thy flanks, enter Thy head with songs, let it enter both thy arms, with bounty. O Hero! Hie hither, O priests, sit ye down and sing hymns in praise of Indra. Laud Laud him, richest of the rich, who lords over the noblest wealth. May He stand by us in our needs for our wealth. May He come nigh to us with mitht!

We cell on Indra, the mightiest, as friends, in every need, in every fray to succour us. I call Him, the eternal, the giver of salvation, whom my sire invoked of old. If He hears our call, He would come with souccour of a thousand kinds of riches! Thou purifiest the Yajna where Soma is pressed for acquiring great strength. In the heaven's first region is His seat, who is most mighty, giver of the fruits of actions and prompt to protect. I invoke Him most mighty, a friend to aid in war and prosperity! With this hymn, I invoke Agni, the son of strength, dear, wisest envoy, skilled in sacrifice, eternal, messenger of all. See, the brilliant Daughter of Heaven is approaching dispelling darkness of night that we may see. The friendly Lady ushers in the light. The sun, the refulgent star of

heaven, ascending pouse down his beams together with the Dawn. O Dawan, at thine and the sun's rising, may we attain our share in your light. O Sun and Moon, the settlers of all, these subjects desiring light call on you. I invoke you for help, O giver of wealth and wisdom to the subjects. One minded, both of Ye, drive down your car to us, and enjoy this gladdening Soma juice!

Knowing the ancient splendour, the learned men draw the sparkling milk from the Soma plant, giver of wisdom and joy. This Soma is like the Sun, flows forth in seven streams to the vats and to the heavens! He purifying all, stands above all else as does the God Sun over all. The gold-hued, dazzling God manifests himself for the Gods and flows through the straining cloth to the vat. Soma, well pressed, purified and strengthened by the wise priests flows forth, a God for Gods. O learned men, let this God, opulent and purifying, flow on for other Gods! Like the waves of water, Soma, the excellently, sweet, flows forth with intensity to the Gods. The bright and joyous Soma, decked liked a beloved son, is pressed and flowed forth by skilled men like a car driven to a battlefield. The rapturous Soma, well expressed, hath flowed forth to our Yajna, to glorify us. Just as the Sun lords over all the world, so does this Soma control the minds of all. Just as a steed is led by the reins, so is Soma cleansed with fingers. The fingers of the learned priests make Soma flow forth with the stones for Indra to drink. Roaring flows Soma, the friend of Gods, to all sides in streams. Glorious gold-hued, on he flows, for him who expresses it.

O Lord of tranquility flow forth with thy wonderous aids, Thou foremost of all, purify our hymns and prayers of every sort! O witness to all, flow onward. Thou inspires clouds to rain and our speech to recite hymns. O Sage, O Soma, the Vedic verses rush to sing thy glory! Soma, flow forth, make, us glorious and drive away our foes! In thy friendship, O Soma, most mighty, most glorious, may we overthrow all those who war against us! Guard us with those lethal weapons, which Thou hast for the destruction of the wicked! O Soma, potent, bright and mighty, Thou lords over all! O God, throw open for us the gates of riches! O thou, effulgent and strong, we invoke Thee for thy friendship. Being sprinkled with waters and purified by men. Thou reachest the wooden vessel! O

well armed, hie The hither, and shower on us heroic strength! O God, Purifier of the soul, we seek to acquire thy friendly love. O God, be gracious unto us, with thy mighty waves which overflow the filtering sieve. O all purifying Lord, grant us wealth, food and heroic sons!

We choose Agni, the envoy, the skilled performer of the holy rite and instrumental in producing various things. We invoke Agni, the Lord of subjects, the Giver of all objects and much beloved. O Adorable God, bring the Gods hither, Thou art revealed to those who perform Yajna. Thou giveth all desirable things and happiness. We call upon Varuna and Mitra of pure strength, to drink of Soma juice. I invoke Mitra and Varuna, who by Law sustain the world, and art lords of the shining light. Let varuna be our special protector, let Mitra guard us with all his protective forces. They both make us rich in wisdom and wealth! The learned singers of Samveda glorify the god only. The chanters of Rigveda also praise the same God. Let all the Vedas, and speeches of the wise, glority the Lord of the Universe! O Lord protect us ever in all battles where abundant wealth is gained. O Omnipresent protect us with Thy peerless protective powers. God the Creator, hath placed the Sun, high in the heaven, so that men may see afar. The Sun draws the water of the ocean up, takes it high in sky and then rains it down. To Sun and Agni we offer our reverent oblations with holy hymns for our protection. The learned priests implore and sing to both these Gods to gain wealth and food and strength. We also invoke them with Vedic verses and oblations for the same reason. O Purifier, Sustainer of the Heaven and Earth, helping us like the Sun to see, Thou strength giving Soma, we call on Thee for winning riches. O Pavaman Soma, gold, gold hued, offered to Gods in oblation by the priests, Thou flow forth and incite Indra to battle, thine ally!

Just as the bull bellows on seeing the kine, so does Thou ascend to the heaven resounding the Earth and Space with Thy roar. This shout is heard like that of Indra's in the battle. Being cleansed and waxing strong. Thou excellently sweet, effulgent, colourful, effused, flow Thou forth for our happiness, urging the clouds to rain! We, thy devotees call on Thee to win wealth and power. The

hero in war calls on Thee for aid, men call on Thee on all sides for protection. O wonderous, thunderer, lord of the clouds, chastiser of the foes, mighty and adored, give us ever kine, oxen and horses as a Victorious hero is given for his enjoyment. I sing to Indra, who giveth many gifts, as we all know. I sing his praise, who rich in wealth, bestows upon his eulogisers gifts of wealth thousandfold! Just as a hero destroys the enemy hosts in the battle, just as the streams flow forth from a mountain, so do his gifts flow, who feedeth many a one. O Indra, the thunderer, thy devotees offered thee oblations before. Now, Indra listen to him who praises thee, and be master of our houser! O All-pervading, adorable, prayed through hymns, be gracious unto thy devotees, and grant them help and protection! O Soma, flow onward with thy juice, gladdening all. Thou protects the noble and destroys the wicked. Being united with kine like beautiful Vedic verses, fast like a hawk, the Soma rests in his home.

This pure, strength and wealth-giving Soma, loved by all, is obtained in the wooden vessel. He nourishes all the beins and fills the Earth and Heaven with light. Beautiful verses sing the praise of the gladdening drink in joyous mood. When purified, the sparkling Soma flows on in many streams. O Pavaman, grant us thy gladdening, mighty juice which may pervade our five sense organs and whereby we may win riches. Soma, the enhancer of intellect, specially bright, creator of days, dawns and heaven, the filler of rivers, offered in oblation by the learned priests, roaring in the vat, goes high up in the sky. Purified by the sages, flows on the Soma, roaring into vats. From the vats He issues forth shedding nectar through the three worlds, enhances Vay's strength to make him friend of Indra. This Soma, purifying, makes the mornings shine and makes the rivers flow. Soma. the cheerer and giver of heart's delight, fills the three times seven streams with joy. Thou art verily the friend of the brave; steadfast and strong art Thou! art praiseworthy indeed! Be Thou our supporter, O Lord of wealth, praised by all the worshippers. O protector of might and armies, taking delight in well pressed Soma blent with milk, remain ever alert like the Veda-knowing priests. All holy hymns have magnified Indra, vast as the sea, the best of warriors borne on cars,

the lord of strength and horses. May we never, strong in thy friendship, be afraid, O Indra, lord of might! We laud Thee with songs, the never conquered conqueror! The eternal gifts and saving succour of old never fail him, who gives kine, wealth and food to Thy worshippers.

These rapid flowing streams of Soma are offered in libation to bring us all felicities. Soma, the remover of afflictions, giver of strength, brings to our progeny easy success. The purifying Soma is eulogised with holy hymns to travel through the space. Pressed for the feast of Gods, Soma giveth us brilliance, beauty and foe-subduing strength. O Soma, grant us manyfold increase of kine, horses and wealth for our protection. O tranquil Soma, pervading many worlds, the Lord of limitless might and wealth, prayed through Vedic hymns, we seek Thee with sacrifice. We attain Thee, O slayer of the enemies, adorable, door of innumerable mighty deeds! O Lord of the noblest deeds, and the Universe, Thou nourishes the three worlds. The man who desires opulence, therefore, seeks Thy refuge. He, the seer of all, the giver of desired fruit, Lord of the subjects, pervading the whole universe, possess great renown. The revolver of the sun, etc., protector of sacrifice, the lord should be contemplated upon by the soul, ever migrating like a bird, O Soma, cleansed by the sages, manifest thyself in flowing streams, and approach us with thy splenddour! O Lord, praised through speech, creating life, Thou gold-hued, give wealth, might and happiness to the folk! O Soma, effulgent and purifying, revered by the priests, go Thou to God's resting place! Agni, the lord of the home, ever youthful, bearer of oblations, whose mouth is ladle, He worthy of invocation, is kindled by rubbing together the sticks. O God, Agni, be the sure protector of him, who worships Thee, the giver of manifold gifts! Be gracious unto him, O God, who, rich in sacrifice, would fain call on Thee!

I call on Mitra of holy strength and foe-destroying Varuna, who both give us happiness in our daily activities. Mirta and Varuna, created by God, the absolute Truth, augment the truth and are causes of establishment of contact with God. They pervade all in the form of the universe. Mitra and Varuna are givers of happiness. They of vast dominion, maintain strength and are refuge of

multitude. I invoke both Indra and Agni, praised by all since times immemorial. May they never harm us! The mighty Indra and Agni we invoke, may they be kind to us engaged in sacrifice! They both destroy our foes, they both subdue the evil tendencies and drive away everything that may cause us harm. The learned men, who have obtained elixir of knowledge, immersed in joy, preaching it everywhere, realize the bliss in the ocean of their heart. A holy and learned man, practising yoga, attains God, the Embodiment of Truth. Such a man realizes the God through self- control and true wisdom. A Yogi, farseeing, Self-disciplined, guided by wisdom attains God, vast like an ocean.

A wise man preaches all around him the wisdom of God in the form of the three Vedic speeches of Rig, Yaju and Sam. Just as the kine come to their master, so do the hymns reach the Gods. The gladdening Vedic verses long to reach the God. The learned enquire into God with their intellect. Contemplated upon and purifying, the God is eulogised through Vedic hymns, but He canot be described in words or hymns. O God, showerer of beatitude all around, Purifier, Pervading our souls, come unto us with bliss, wisdom, and let our knowledge, grow. O God, not even hundred heavens, hundred earths can match Thee. Not even a hundred Suns together with the Earth and Heaven can compass Thee, O Chastiser of the wicked! O God, the Fulfiller of desires, Almighty, All-pervading, protect us with all Thy protecting wonderous aids! O God, Destroyer of vice, we of purified heart and engaged in Thy worship, meditate on Thee with a steadfast mind like waters in an ocean. O God, the wealth of the poor, many invoke Thee ever for bliss, just as a thirsty man goes to the place of water. O All- seeing, Foremost, completely Fearless. Thou grantest the learned the wealth, cattle and food. Therefore, we call on Thee. The Sun enjoys the Soma oblations with a great skill. I, the priest make ye all bow to much-worshipped God with my Vedic speech, just as a wright bends his wheel for easy motion. They who give great gifts, love not petty praise; riches come not to a niggard and violent churl. Whatever worthgiving exists in this world, O Lord of wealth, indicates Thy excellence. The priests recite the three Vedas, kine low for milking and the tawny-hued Soma bellows while being

offered in oblation. The divine Vedic speech, which is purifying, praises Soma, the Child of Heaven, as does the mother a worthy son. O Soma, make the four seas full of manifold riches pur from every side for our profit! The excellently sweet Soma juices, pressed for joy, flow in all directions. May these sweet juices reach the Gods! The sages have declared that Soma flows for Indra. Soma, the lord of speech, the mighty, desiring, Yajna, deserves our praise. Of thousand streams, full of juices, lord of speech, nourisher of the sacrificers, manifests himself day by day.

O Soma, the guardian of the knower of the Vedas, thy purity is vast, almighty thou pervades all the organs of the body, but a non-yogi, being raw cannot enjoy this purity. Those who are mature only enjoy this. Soma the brilliant and pure has his seat high in heaven. His threads in the atmosphere glitter with light. The swift flowing juices of Soma protect the sacrificer, and then being offered in oblation soar up high in the sky. Inspired by Some's wisdom, the learned work, the Sun makes the mornings shine and pours rain all around for grains, and the fathers impregnate the womb. O singers, chant verses in praise of the holy, most mighty munificent the refulgent Agni! The enkindled in sacrifice, famed and splendid Agni giveth heroic sons and food. May his wisdom come unto us with ample strength! We praise the unconquerable conquering God, the Lord of clouds and mountains who subdues foes, pervades all and creates the worlds. With whatever strength Thou created the Sun and other shining bodies, with the same strength, Thou manifests thyself on the sacred seat of the Yajna. Sages sing Thy praise this day too, as of yore, because Thou releases the waters from bondages of Vritra. O great Indra, listen to my call, the call of him who praises thee. Shower on him wealth of kine and valiant off-spring! He praises thee with hymns full of beautiful and deep words. Thou grant him an intellect, full of wisdom, ever lasting, nourisher of Yaina and Veda-loving! Let us praise that God alone, whom Vedic verses have magnified. Him we praise, the Lord of many mighty deeds, to gain his favour.

O purifying God, Thy celestial, all-pervading, gladdening streams flow forth into the vessel. The learned priests express and make Soma bright, Who cause the clouds to pour down from the heaven.

When golden-hued Soma is cleansed in the Vat, he rests there as one in his house. Then the all pervading beams of Soma, sent forth from from heaven and earth, spread all around. Soma, the all-seeing, mighty, influential, encompasses everything with his rays. O Thou, all-pervading, purifying all, art the Lord of all the worlds! From heaven hath Soma made, as it were, the wonderous thunder and the lofty light of mankind. O Soma, effulgent, thy perfect, gladdening and strengtheining juice flows on through the woollen sieve and gets into vat. Thy splendid, mighty and lustrous juice flows all around to spread light and happiness. Thy streams, impetuous, bright and nourishing, flow forth with speed like the beams. We praise the pure Soma, so that we may overthrow the breeaker of the law, the uncomfortable anti- social and undutiful foes. The mighty Soma's roar is pleasing like that of the rain. The lightning flashes roam in heaven. O God, Soma, kindly pour forth kine, steeds, gold, heroic sons and food in abundance. O All-seeing, fill the earth and heaven, as does the Sun, the Dawn with his rays. Flow forth around us with Thy gladdening streams like a river flowing to the lower lands. Flow forth, O Thou, beloved flow on every side, all around us, saying, I flow where the Gods abide. Purifier of the unholy, bestower of food, cause Thou the rain to pour down. This Soma, poured down on the straining cloth, reaches heaven in diverse way through the atmosphere. The sparkling Soma, reaches the heaven dazzling the atmosphere, roaring with might. Sweetening the near and distant air, the Soma juices are offered in oblation to Gods. The learned priests press out the golden hued Soma with stones for Indra to drink.

Just as the beautful ladies, sisters to one another, resort to their Lord with love, so do the fingers of the priests urge Soma to pour into a vat. Expressed for Gods, O purifying Soma, grant us all kinds of wealth. O Soma, pour down happy rain, regularly and in time for food and the sacrifice. Agni, the guardian of the world, ever watchful, awakener, mighty, handsome, has been born for our fresh happiness and weal. His mouth besmeared with ghee, purifying, he shineth brilliantly for the good of the sacrificers. O Agni, the learned Angiras discover Thee, lying hidden in most woods, going back and forth in search. Thou, called the son of

strength, art produced by friction. The sage enkindle Agni, in his threefold seat, the ensign of Yajna and the lord of home. He helps in the performance of the Yajna by manifesting himself on the sacred seat along with other Gods.

Strengthened by sacrifice, this Soma hath been pressed for you. O Mitra and Varuna, listen ye heroes to this my call! Both the Gods, who never injure anything, have come to their sublime home, the thousand pillard dwelling. They both, lustrous, protector of the sacrificers, shining like the sun, sovereign kings work together in harmony. Indra of great might, armed with Dadhichi's bones, slew ninety-nine Vritras! Searching the enemy's head, lying concealed in the mountainlike-forts, he found it in the sky. All agree that part of the sun's light is there in the mansion of the Moon. Just as rain comes out of clouds, so this noblest praise is produced from the hearts of learned and meditative men. O Gods, listen to the singer's call, accept his hymns and grant his prayers! O Indra and Agni, urge us not to sin, nor to slander, not to violence! O Soma, gladdening and mighty, may thou reach Vayu and Marut to drink! Established in heaven, showerer of rains, gladdening, awakener of intellect, Soma looks graceful in the company of Indra, Vayu and other Gods. O Soma, sent by meditation, roaring in thy home, ascend into atmosphere as thy nature dictates.

Soma, thy friendship has been my strength everyday. O nourisher of the world, many afflictions of birth torment me, help me thou overcome these foes! O Peace giving, sustainer of the world, we ever praise thee, in the morning, during day and in night. Just as birds fly, so may we meditating upon thee, higher than the Sun, attain liberation! Soma, viewed in different forms, overwhelming all the enemies, stimulating the intellect, is cleansed with fingers. The red-hued Soma, hath ascended his seat in the heavens, and Indra hath approached Soma. O happy Soma, send us now great opulence from every side, and pour riches a thousandfold! O Indra, Lord of the bay steeds, drink of this cheering Soma, pressed out with stones. Just as a well trained steed, driven by the hands of rider, takes us to destination, so is this juice pressed, drink it and be satisfied. Let this drink, thy beloved friend by which Thou overcomes the foes, gladden thee, the Lord of manifold riches! O

Indra, mark well the praise chanted by me, this laud sung by the learned men. Accept these Vedic verses sung at the sacrifice! All men in one accord should elect their king such a man as is victorious, subduer of the enemies, firm on his seat, mighty, fierce, stalwart and full of vigour. He should be equipped well with weapons for sacrifice and administration. The learned, brilliant, free from all deceit, quick in reciting Vedic verses, bow unto Indra singing hymns. Bards in unison sing to him so that he might enjoy Soma. He the lord of light, of strong determination, equipped with protective powers, is invoked in Yajna.

I praise him in sing, who is the sovereign Lord, moves in chariots unrestrained, slays Vritra, conquers all fighting hosts, and is mighty. O Learned, call upon Indra for his aid, who holds thunderbolt in his hand, is handsome and mighty like the Sun. Soma, the learned Sage of heaven, when pressed, roaring bestows upon us delightful powers. Born pure, great, Soma, the son illumines the Earth and Heaven, his parents! Some, free from all deceit, loveable, dwelling in high glorious home flows forth with delight. Soma, the celestial, pure and endowed with splendour, Thou givest immortability to beings. By whom the men spread their Vedic speech, by whom the sages obtain their desires, by whom did they win fame and felicity in the Yajna, may the same God be realized by us! The pure and purifying Soma flows in waves when filtered through the wool, roaring before the chanting of Vedic hymns. The sages cleanse the mighty Soma, sporting above the wool in the wood. The learned praise him of triple height, Mighty like a steed, Soma is released into brakers. He is roaring, while being filtered, glides on.

Soma, the source of intellect, father of the Earth and Heaven; creator of Agni, generator of the Sun, Indra and Vishnu, flows on to sacrificers. Soma, the lord of herbs, the Brahma of learned priests, the leader of poets, the seer of the wise, multiplier of the animals, axe of the forests and hawk among the birds like vultures, etc., goes roaring over the cleansing wool. Just as a river stirs waves, so does Soma, Pavaman stirs our power of speech, songs and praise. He strengthens sight as does an ox to a cow through insemination. Pavaman, the showerer of rains, dwelling in the

sense-organs gives them power of cognition. Worship ye well Agni, who helps in your Yajnas, is the lord of might, brother-like in assistance and refulgent. Just as a carpenter shapes various articles our of wood with his strength, so may the famed Angi stand by us with his might.

This Agni, is the sovereign among all the glorious Gods. May he come near unto us with his strength. O Indra, enjoy this excellent, gladdening drink. May thou enjoy these sparkling streams flowing here at the sacrifice! None can emulate thee Indra in driving a chariot, none can match thee in might, none can overtake thee while you drive a car. O subjects, verily sing songs of praise to Indra, chant his glories, bow to this great and mighty lord, the juices poured forth have gladdened him. O Indra, destroyer of foes, mighty, handsome, manifest theyself, taking delight in juices, drink of this Soma for ecstatic joy. O Indra, fill thy belly with this divine sweet, freshly pressed out juice, which flows singing sweetly. Friend to all like Mitra, impartial like a sage, refulgent like sun, Indra quells the enemy host in Soma's ecstatic joy.

O tranquil and exultant Lord, Thou art giver of wealth, might, brilliance and glory. Thou pervadest pervadest all the worlds. All these men worship Thee with hymns. O omniscient and mighty, purify us. O Soma, seer of men from all sides, purifier, fulfiller of desires, Thou art embodiment of peace. Pour down on thy subjects wealth, food and glory so that we may have strength to live in the world. Just as the beams emanate from the Sun and remove darkness so do the streams of Vedic verses issue forth from Thy purifying self. O omniscient! O Soma, thou art deep like an ocean and purifies space, investing them with strength. O Pure, thou induces the speech, revealing the Vedas in the hearts of the Seers like the Sun in the morning. Purified, sparkling Soma goes skyward roaming amidst the rays of the Sun. Like waters tumbling down a helight, the streams of Soma flow forth, being cleansed, all around to Indra. O Pavaman, thou flows to Indra, being purified and offered in oblation by priests. Pressed out with stones and purified, the Soma flows forth swiftly for Indra's delight. Soma, the pure, praiseworthy and nourisher of mankind flows forth. Showerer, of rains, praised by Vedic verses, pure, purifier, wonderous and

mighty Soma flows on. Soma, the self-pure, purifying others, excellently sweet, expressed, slayer of the foes, is called the gratifier of Gods.

Subduer of all the foes, Soma, the Sage, hath been enrobed in the wool for Gods to drink. He, the Soma, Pavaman giveth to his worshippers manifold riches in the form of kine, etc. Thou purifiest all with thy thoughts and grapest all with thy mind. Grant us grains and purity. Pour on the sacrificers and those who sing thy laud, great fame, abiding wealth and food in abundance! Envoy of the Yajna, wonderful, Soma, thou art the lord of excellent deeds, purifying, praiseworthy like a king and one who enters the hymns. He, the leader of sacrifice, invincible, cleansed by hands, is resting in the vat. Worthy of praise like the Yajna, sportive, giver of heroic strength, to the priests, Soma goest into the vat. Pour on us, O Soma, Juices in profusion, all kinds of grains and all happy felicities! O Soma, as is thy praise and fame, so do come thou dear nigh unto us and occupy thy seat! Bestow on us kine and steed in great numbers, O Soma, through these days that fly on wings. He who conquering many remains unconquerable, destroys the enemy by laying seize the same Soma come unto us. O Pavaman, settle in the vat with thy excellently sweet streams poured forth for protection. He, the Soma leaving the wooly filter, seats himself on the sacred grass and then flows for Indra to drink. O Agni, thy visible glories are like lightning from the rain-cloud and like the light of the coming Dawn. By pervading plants and forest trees, thou crammest by thyself the foodstuff in thy mouth. O Agni, Thou presiding priest in the Yajna, awaker of wisdom, controller of the thought, great or small, we elect Thee Hotar-priest of the sacrifice, Thee alone and none else!

O Varuna and Mitra, verily very extensive is your protection. May I attain your kind good counsel! True and guileless Ye Gods, may we gain home, food and remain your friend for ever! O Mitra and Varuna guard us with your protective forces, defend us with your best defences. May we subdue the wicked with our strong bodies! O Indra, realising thy might Thou arose and shook the jaws, having drunk the fresh Soma. From Indra I receive the knowledge of an eight-footed Vedic verse, with nine parts, which lends strength to

the Low. O Indra and Agni, these lauds have been sung for you. You bring beatitude and drink this juice! Come unto us Indra and Agni, leaders of men, with your desired company! Ye both the heroes come to enjoy Soma juice offered in libation. O Soma, come roaming with thy roar, and rest in the wooden vessel, thy dwelling! May water-cleansed Soma flow to Indra, Varuna and other Gods! O Soma, bestowing food upon our progeny from all sides, pour on us riches thousandfold! Pressed out with stones by the priests, goes up with speeds, the green-hued Soma, in fume from the sacrifice. Just as the cows, which have been milked, go to pasturage, or as rivers flow to the ocean, so do streams of Soma juice flow to the wooden vat for delight. O purifying Soma, bring to us the wonderous, laudable, treasure that exists on earth. O Lord, purifying all men, thou gold-hued, hath manifested unto us. Ye both Indra and Soma, are lords of bliss, kine and speech, as mighty ones, grant our prayers.

We invoke Indra, who like the Sun destroys the wicked, is present with us for our might and appiness. We invoke him in battles great or small. He is our chief commander, may he be our protector, O hero, thou art well-wisher of the army and subduer of all hostile forces. Thou art victor of battles great or small. Thou lord of abundant wealth, givest fearlessness and happiness. O Indra, when battles arise, Thou destroyest the enemy and giveth wealth to thy friends and other noble souls. Yoke thy powerful and delightful steeds, humble the pride of the foes and make us rich! The bright rays of the Sun, enabling creatures to enjoy, drink savoury juices of Soma with delight, diffused all over in space. So do subjects rejoice sovereign. Desirous of his contact, the tawny kine give abundant milk, which is mixed with Soma juce. Thus making Indra strong, thy urge him to use his thunderbolt to kill the enemy. The armies of Indra, honour his strength with veneration passing wise and observe his many laws for their own good. Mighty, mountain born Soma, hath been pressed out in streams for ecstasy. Hawk-like he dwells in his home. Pressed out by priests, cleansed in waters, sweetened and blent with milk, Soma is beloved of Gods. Just as a battle horse is decorated, so do the priests adorn the Soma juice with festivity for eternal life.

O refulgent, Lord of great fame and food, let high and splendid glory shine all around us. Unlock the cask of the middle region! O omniscient, all pervading, king of all the subjects, pour on us rain, let waters flow from heaven, and develop our strengths of action and knowledge! Soma, the child like grants us lustre in the Yaina, surpassing all things dear, and stands both in the heaven and on the earth. Flow forth in streams through the wool, O Soma for acquisition of wealth. Flow thou, exceedingly rich in sweetness for Gods! Just as the milch-kine lick their new born calf, so do our pure hymns caress thee, while thou art being cleansed, O golden hued! O mighty one, thou soars high above the earth and heaven. O Pavaman, thou has enrobed thyself in milk, as it were a coat of mail. Soma, blent with milk, mighty, infusing vigour, flows for Indra. He slays the wicked, quells malignity, being the lord of home, and giver of bliss. Pressed and blent with milk, flows he in streams, gladdened in the love of Indra, the source of God's joy. Being cleansed, he flows on to perform sacred rites, invested with powers that suit the season, engaging the ten swift fingers of the pressers.

O Agni, refulgent God, we kindle Thee. This fuel which is lighted with thy light, may send forth its flame to thee. Bring food, etc., for thy worshippers! To the Agni, the refulgent Lord, giver of joy, sustainer of the world, wonderous, is offered oblation with the Vedic verse. O bearer of our oblations, grant food to them who sing thy lauds! O glorious god, thou heatest both and aldles in thy mouth. Fulfil our desires O mighty one! Sing ye, a great song to the high Indra, for him who grows food and is worthy of worship. O Indra, thou givest splendour to the Sun, Thou, the creator of all objects, art mighty, the God of Gods! Thou the illuminator of the Heaven, radiant with light, the Gods strive to win thy friendship and love, O Indra! O mightiest Indra, this Soma hath been prepared for you. O potent humbler of our foes, may this juice fill you with vigour as does the Sun, the world with his rays. O hero, destroyer of the foes as the Sun destroys the clouds, mount thy car, in which bay steeds have been yoked. May the pressing stones, with their cloud like voice, well encourage thy heart! Let Indra of indomitable might, admired by the wise, be brought hither by his strong steeds

to our songs of laud and Yajna.

The excellently sweet, most rich, the omnipresent, father of Gods, the best of cheerers, most gladdening, the juice loved by Indra, giveth us salvation. The Lord of heaven, green hued, pleasing to sight, cause of rain, far seeings flows swiftly in thousand streams and singing to the vat. He dwells in the houses where Mitra abides. Soma, thou pressed out by priests, flowing before the rain showers, before the songs and the kine art the Lord of speech. As lord of might thou acquires great spoil in the van of war. The mighty, swift and semen augmenting Soma, is offered in oblation with a desire for steeds, kine and heroic sons. Being cleansed and purified by the fingers of the priests, the Soma, Pavaman flows through the fleecy filter. May these Soma streams pour upon his worshippers manifold treasure from all sides! Flow, thou Soma, beloved of Gods, showerer of rains, fast through the wool and enter into the atmosphere! O sustainer of the world, giver of wealth and food, rest in thy place in heaven as one with power! The excellent and sweet Soma was pressed out to flow in streams while cleansed with waters. The great waters follow in thy wake when thou art enrobed with milk. Soma, our friend, full of juices, lord of heaven, is cleansed with waters in the wooden vessel. Handsome to look at like Mitra, the green- hued Soma, bellowing like a bull, shines in the company of the Sun. O Soma, the songs of wisdom and action are beautified with thy mighty, wherewith we praise thee for rapturous joy. O Soma, we pray thee for acquiring joy, so that thou mayest have exalted praise. O Primeval Lord, thou art the winner of wealth, heroes and steeds. O Soma, pour on us with thy great strength, the excellently sweet stream of elixir, like a cloud, showerer of rain. O holy and highly famed God, bring us victory and high renown, and make us better than we are! Give us thou all felicities and divine light. Give us skilful strength and mental power, sweep away our foes and make us better! O learned men, cleanse Soma for Indra to drink. Grant us realization through thy help and mental powers, and make us better than we are. O God, may we through thy aids, look long upon the Sun. Make us better than we are! O well-armed Soma, grant us riches doubly great and make us better than we are! O Conquering but unconquered in

battle, give us ample wealth and make us better than we are! The sages magnify thee, O Soma, with their songs. Make us better than we are! O Pavaman, grant us riches and steeds of many kinds and make us better than we are!

Pressed out in streams, sanctified with hymns and praised by speech is Soma, by drinking which one crosses the ocean of life and attains salvation. Swift flows the Soma, giver of riches, effulgent, strengthening and who knows how to protect men. May we obtain the thousands of streams of Soma, the giver of delight! From whom we obtain 3,00,000 delightful streams, the same Soma, runs swift giving joy. The strength giving Soma streams are offered in oblation, praised with hymns to obtain greater powers. Soma, the purifier, giver of food and grains beloved like the riches, manifests himself for showering the rains. O God, praised by Jamdagni, pour on us food and nourishment. We the worshippers, compose songs in praise of Agni, which reach him as if they were a car. O Angi, may we never suffer in thy friendship! O foremost in the Yajna, we the priests serve thee, O Agni, with different kinds of fragrant fuels every day for our fulfilment. Let us not suffer in thy friendship! O Agni, may we have ability to kindle thee. Grant thou our daily prayers. O Envoy of the Gods, bring other Gods hither. Through thee the oblations offered reach to other Gods. Let us not, in thy friendship, suffer harm. I sing to Mitra, Varuna and Aryaman, the subduer of the foes, early in the morning as the Sun rises O learned men, may this prayer bring us gold, and strength. May we be thine O Varuna, O Mitra. May we acquire food and happiness!

Drive the foe away, strike down the enemies that tread the earth, and grant the desired wealth. Give us the wealth we long for, which thou grantest in profusion and which the world craves. O God, grant us the desired wealth found in secret and hidden places. O Indra and Agni, Ye both art priests of sacrifice, well versed in the rites! O Indra and Agni, Ye art subduers of the foe, slayers of Virtra, riders of fast chariots and ever invincible. The learned men press out with stones, the gladdening drink for ye, O Agni and Indra. O rich and excellently sweet Soma, soar high to the lightning girt with air, I sit beside the Yajna altar! The sages, learned in Vedas, laud thee, O Soma sustainer of the world. Men purify and

make thee beautiful. Let Mitra, Aryaman Varuna drink thy gladdening juice. O Pavaman, giver of yellow, abundant, much desired wealth, thou when purified in the vat, raises thy roar. When pressed out and purified through the wool, thou bellowest in the wooden vessel. Pavaman, blent with milk, reaches the place of Gods. Soma, the son of sea, is cleansed by the ten fingers, before he is seen in the company of the Sun. Pressed out in vat, he effused, flows forth to Indra and Vayu with the rays of the Sun. The sweet and excellent Soma flows on for Mitra, Varuna, Bhaga, Vayu, Pushan and for us.

May our subjects be rich and strong with the favour of Indra. May we wealthy in food, rejoice with them. Just as the axle of a chariot with its wheels carries car, so do thou, O Indra, grant us our desires, wealth and learning. As a milch cow is to him who milks. We glorify and invoke Indra every day the doer of noble deeds, for our knowledge and protection. Come unto us Indra, and drink of Soma juice offered in libation. He, being gladdened with juices bestows rich gifts on his devotees. Let us know thee through the learned men, nearest to thee. Come unto us neglect us not! Like the Dawn, thou hast filled the Earth and Heaven with light. Thou mighty one, the leader of men, thy light, the creator of the world manifests thee; the blessed light reveals thee. As a man controls a mighty elephant who happens in a rut, so do thou possess the power to control the world. As a goat draws down the branch with its foremost foot, so do thou create and sustain this universe with thy powers. O Indra, relax that man's stubborn strength who is bent upon wickedness and trample him down beneath your feet, who desires to harm us. Thy light manifests thy glory. The creator of all objects, thy power manifests thee. Soma, who pleases Gods, bestows. riches, land and handsome children, is pressed out by the learned Soma, the Gods derive pleasure from thee, Thou art our protection and bestower of happiness. O learned men, sing the laud of that Pavaman, who is purifying Sweeten Soma with mixing milk, honey and other such sacred things, as a child is pleased and decorated with gifts, etc. Just as a calf is nourished by milch-kine, so is Soma urged foreward while being pressed and cleansed. He who protects and gladdens the Gods, is adorned by the learned

priests. Soma is a great source of strength, and a rich feast for men. He is exceedingly sweet for Gods, effused by the wise. May the Soma juices, that further our weal, friendly, immaculate, benevolent, full of wisdom, flow unto us. The Soma juices, cleansed with purity, blent with curds and milk, of great intellect, flowing forth and set in wooden vat resemble the brilliant sun. Being pressed out with stones, and adomed in many ways, the Soma juices, shower wealth and food on us, the contemplative men, from all sides.

Flow forth thou Soma, swift like wind, the lord of wisdom, purifying, effulgent, to the sparkling lake and bestow wealth, food, etc., on thy worshippers. O Soma, flow on the thy famed ford with pleasant resounding roar and purify us. Just as a man standing under a tree full of ripe fruits shakes many of them down, so do thou shower on us sixty thousand treasures! The two great and mighty tasks performed by Soma are: He sends the foe to sleep and slays them, and sweeps away those who are foolish and unfriendly! O Agni, thou omniscient, most praise worthy be our closest friend, protector and our benign deliverer! O Agni, most resplendent, rich and famed, come unto us and give us wealth of knowledge, etc. To thee, O most brilliant, O radiant God, we verily approach thee with prayers for happiness for our friends! May Indra, other Gods and these existing worlds complete our happiness! May Indra along with Aditya, with Aditya, bring fuliflment to our soul, bodies and our offspring. May Indra, Maruts and Adityas send us medicines to heal us! Praise Indra, the mightiest Virtra-slayer, sing to him the song that pleases!

The God, creator of speech, contributing to the happiness of holymen like a brother, sanctifying, Lord of the Gods. preaching the knowledge of Vedas, reveals the birth of deities. The swan- like discriminating learned men, the friends of God Soma, sing his praise in unison. Like cars thundering on their way, like swift steeds, the pure Soma streams flow for wealth. Flows forth Soma to Yajna from holding hands like chariots urged to speed, like warriors making their progress in the war. Just as kings are graced with lauds and a Yajna with seven priests, so does the Soma adorn himself with milk. Pressed with holy hymns, the Soma streams, the

excellently sweet flow in profusion all around! Lustrous like the morning sun, Speeding the light of Dawn, the Soma juices look somewhat like beautiful canopy. The chanters of old open the doors of hymns, the men who make the Soma come. The seven wise priests, sit at a sacrifice and preside at the rites. Soma, the foremost in Yajna, we drink, to see, the sun with our own eyes. We milk the Soma's offspring forth. A lustrous learned man beholds with his eyes all around, the Soma, the source of joy and established in heaven by the sacrificing priests. The learned priests, knowing the right application of Soma, offer it in oblation as the law ordains. The best of all oblations, Soma the sweet and most excellent, he swims in mighty waters. Soma, the noble, guileless, flows to the place of sacrifice, singing aloud continuously. Purging the hears around, preaching the Vedic wisdom flows forth he. Being purged sits Soma like a king, lording over the warring subjects. Most beloved, gold-hued, through the filtering wool, settles he in the vat, the singer praised with songs. He flows to Indra, Ashvins and Vaya with ecstatic joy. The streams of Soma flow on to other Gods with their powers. O Ye Heaven and Earth, win us fame, wealth and strength. O God, we choose thee ever, the mighty, giver of peace, wealth and protection. O Soma, thou art excellent, wise and hath an understanding heart, the guardian of us all! Thou art verily our wealth, intelligence, guardian and desire of us all!

Agni created in the beginning, kindled in Yajna is the envoy of Earth the guest of men effulgent and the mouth of Gods. O Agni, eternal, Gods praise and sing for joy at thy coming, as parents do at the birth of a child. O all pervading, the Gods attain immortality by thy powers following path of righteous actions preached by thee. They all praise Agni, the centre of sacrifice, the abode of riches, conveyor of oblations, embodiment of worship and lord of all. O learned men, sing forth the praise of mighty Mitra and Varuna. Both Varuna and Mitra are God of the Gods, lustrous, source of bliss and showerer of rains. So Ye omnipotent Gods, grant us riches both terrestrial and celestial. Great is your command among the Gods. O Indra, wonderous bright, come unto us. These Soma juices, cleansed and purified by active fingers, ever long for thee. Come unto sacrificing, suppliant priests, urged by Yajna, and sped

by hymns Come with speed, O Lord of steeds, to us, the praying men, and enjoy our drink!

O men, glorify that Agni who with his flames encompasses all the forests and leaves them charred and blackened behind. He who gains Indra's favour through oblations in the fire, finds an easy way to riches across the floods. Both Indra and Agni, bestow on us abundant wealth, fast steeds, and nourishing food. Soma coming like a youth with youthful maids flows on to Indra's appointed place. The pleasant hymns sung in praise of Soma, the golden-hued echo the sacrificial halls. O Soma, grant us abundant food, which shall yield us ever thrice a day, strength, nourishment and happiness. He who always worships Indra through sacrifice, etc., the lord of devotees, sovereign, subduer of all, remains always untouched by such evils as lust, etc. I laud him, the mighty, unconquerable in war, at whose advent the mighty persons bow in obeisance, the Earth and Heaven bow in praise. Sit down, ye friends and sing forth forth aloud to him who purifies himself, adorn him for glory, like a child with acts of devotion. O sacrficers blend this Soma, the strength of both the worlds, with milk, as a calf is associated with the kine. O learned sacrificers, cleanse Soma, the source of strength and bliss so that he may gladden Mitra and Varuna. The mighty Soma flows forth in thousand streams through the wool. Cleansed with the waters, blent with milk, the mighty Pavaman flows on in continuous streams. Pressed out with stones by the priests, offered in oblation regularly, drawn up by the clouds, the Soma enters into Indra's stomach.

The Soma juice, which has been pressed out afar or near at hand, or in this land, that expressed in plains, in the midst of householders, or amongst fivefold sacrificers, may shower on us, for our weal, rains and heroic strength. O Agni, I long for thee with speech, because only through thee the speaking fire extends from the heart, the loftiest dwelling place Thou art alike in all the places, through all the regions. We invoke thee in fights and difficulties. Desiring strength we call thee in battle for aid, O giver of wonderous gifts in strife. O Indra, the most active, grant us strength, valur, and a war conquering hero. O Lord, thou hast ever been to us a mother and a sire. So now, for beatitude, we pray to thee. To thee, much invoked,

the master of great might do I beseech. Grant us thou heroic power! O Indra, what wealth thou hast not given me here, that bounty bring to us, filling full both thy hands. Give us that wealth and food, which thou deemest as precious, so that we may know thee as thou art, a boundless giver of gifts! Thy high and famed spirit is spread in all the worlds. With this thou, O thunderer, cleaves even mighty things.

The learned in group, cleanse and decorate the Soma, at his advent, the lovely infant. He is a poet by songs, by wisdom a Sage, he flows on singing and accompanied by hymns, to the vat. Beloved of the seers, seer-maker, of beautiful gait, inspirer of the poets, praiseworthy, desirous to attain his third form, Soma is most splendid. Established between the earth and heaven, mighty like the hawk, roams in the sky, cleansed with waters, the great Soma, illumines the atmosphers. The Soma juices, satisfying Indra's dear desires, shower satisfaction from all sides. Being pressed and established between heaven and earth, these Soma juices may grant us heroic strength. O Soma, urge Indra's heart to charity. For this puurpose I sit in the hall of Yajna. The ten fingers of the priests cleanse thee and then offer to Agni as oblation. The learned rejoice in thee. Being poured, thou art enrobed in milk to be a great banquet to Gods. When cleansed, Soma, green and golden-hued, enrobes himself in milky dress. O Soma flow forth to thy friend Indra, destroying foes and giving us wealth! May we attain thee, O Soma, the Indra's drink and giver of food, progeny and light to see! O Lord of herbs pur down rain and grains on the earth from all sides and give us strength to win the war! Poured through the earth from all sides and give us strength to win the war! Poured through the woollen filter. May these pressed out Soma juices held in both the hands flow on roaring all around. Beloved of Indra, satisfying and roaring Soma destroys all our enemies. Soma, the destroyer of the godless sits in the place of sacrifice.

Exceedingly sweet Soma juices expressed in sacrifice have been poured for Indra. The learned sacrificers invoke Indra to drink the juices, as kine low to their calf. The rapturous Soma, the wise, dwells in the ocean of heart, on the wave of speech. The beauty of sacrifice, the sage and bard, the Soma is worshipped in the central

point of heaven, above the filtering wool. The Indu (Moon) in the sky, holds in close embrace, with his rays, the Soma kept in vats. The Indu, established in an appointed place in heavene, sends forth sweet rays for the speech, urging the speech of men and women, dwells in heaven. O Pavaman, all pervading, give us riches brilliant with a thousands splendour and ready aid. He, the bard and sage, purified in the place of sacrifice, goes to dear places, far away in the atmosphere. Like the roaring waves of the river, thy juices soar themselves. Urge thou the arrow of thunderbolt in Indra's bow. When pressed out, the verses of three Vedas rise up from sacrificers above the woollen heights. Pressed out with stones, cleansed with wool, the sweet and green-hued, the beloved of Gods, Soma is shed. O most joyous and wise Soma, flow on through the siever and attain thy highest place. O best giver of joy, anointed well, flow on and enter into Indra's stomach. O Soma, flow forth to him, who enjoying thy wild delights shatters the 810 castles of the clouds. O God, destroy thou the man and his forts, who is the foe of happiness, for the weal of sacrificers! O Soma, finder of steeds, pour on us fast horses, kine and many kinds of foods in abundance!

Sweeping away the foe and godless, Soma manifests himself and flows on to Indra. O Pavaman, grant us great wealth, annihilate our enemies and give fame with brave sons. O Soma, a hundred obstacles have never checked thee when fain to give thy gifts. Thou being pure, give us abundant wealth. Flows forth Soma, the giver of splendour to the Sun and the showerer of rains. Pavaman, high in the sky, goes through the atmosphere, riding the Sun's rays. O learned men, in your sacrifice, make Agni your enoy, who is purifer, firm, best in rites, leader of men, flame crowned and fed with ghee. Just as a horse nighing eagerly for the pasture, Agni comes forth from the sacrificial fuel, then the wind blows with his flames. The path of Agni is black. From the newly born Agni, the kindled flames rise upward, and he as an envoy speedest to heaven to the Gods. Let us make Indra strong to shatter the forth of clouds of demon Vritra. This Indra hath been created for giving wealth, etc. He is of great might, worthy of Soma libation and famed, strong like thunder, ever active, invincible, never failing, showerer

of rains, learned in vedic speech, Indra sustains the world.

O Adhvaru, make Soma pure for Indra to drunk. The Gods enjoy the excellent and sweet juices. O men, pour out for Indra, the most rich and sweet soma juce, the milk of heaven! Flows forth the gladening juice, sustainer of heavens, the strength of the Gods, hailed by men with joyous shouts. When, he, the gold-hued flows like a courser, shows his splendour. Just as hero, takes his weapons in his hands, so does he, desirous of winning happiness, urge Indra, cleansed by learned men, and offered in oblation. O Soma, enter thou Indra's stomach with thy strength, as lightning enters the clouds, and give us strength, wealth and food through our Yajna. O Indra, though thou art invoked by men in the East, West, North and South, thou art every where with every man at the same time. O invoked by many, thou resplendent pervades all men. Though thou art present alike in all the places, be it a beautiful land, or depraved, or dark, or peopled by the rich, yet when the learned men, knowing Vedas call on the thee with Vedic hymns, thou art attained. May Indra listen to our prayer uttered in his praise. May he come unto us with his strength and drink our Soma juice. The denizens of Earth and Heaven seek thee with their spiritual powers, because thy heart longs for heartfelt beautiful feelings and thou all-pervading, most subtle art present everywhere.

God. flow forth to Indra and mount to Vayu as thy nature dictates. O Pavaman, lord of herbs, thou givest fame and wealth. O Soma, go thou unto the lake! Soma, thou flowest forth driving away the foes and chasing the godless afar! Shower on us riches thousandfold, most splendid, that eclipse the light, desired by hundreds. May we live in thy closest proximity. May we be most near to thy bounty full of wealth and food craved by many. This Some, pressed out and urged to flow by Vedic hymns, pours through the wool, spreading joy on all sides. Flow on Soma like a mighy sea, as sire of the Gods! Flow on, and be thou blissfuul to Heaven and earth, and all living beings. O lord of tranquility, mighty, sustainer of the heavens, flow forth and purify us for ever! O men, I laud Agni, your most beloved guest and friend, envoy of Gods like a car. Agni, whom the learned invoke in his two aspects, hath been established among the mortals since times immemorial.

O thou most mighty Agni, protect the charitably disposed men, listen their prayers and preserve their children. O Indra dear, ever conquering but unconquered, vast like a mountain spread on all sides, pervading all, come unto us. O truthful Soma-drinker Indra, thou verily lords over both the worlds. Thou sustains heaven and gives strength to him who pours libation. O lord of heaven, thou art he, who upholdeth all our cities, slayest Vritra and giveth strength to sacrifice loving men. O Indra, the thunderer, thou art renderer of forts, ever youthful, of unmeasured strength, sustainer of all rites, and much praised. O Indra, upholder of thunderbolt, thou broke open the fortress of Vritra, full of kine. Then, all Gods fearless under thy protection come pressing to thy aid. O men, praise with hymns, Indra who reigneth by his might, whose bounteous gifts are thousandfold, yea, even more.

Guardian of the world, creating beings, pressed with the stones, mighty, the Soma waxes strong. O Soma, for our wealth and sacrifice make-Vay glad, gladden Mitra and Baruna, cheer Heaven and earth and other Gods. The mighty Soma, cleansed with waters, chooses the Gods, and performs a great deed by granting strength to Indra and light to the Sun. This immortal Soma flows on, like a bird, to settle in the wooden vessels. Lauded by the learned, this effulgent Soma abides in the waters and grants splendid gifts to the devotees. This Pavaman grants all precious gifts to his followers like a hero going forth with his warriors. Pavaman folws on with speed, purifying,like a chariot. He lets his voice be heard by all. Soma, the golden-hued is adorned for gaining wealth by men, devout and efficient in hymns. This God expressed with hymns, flows on fast subduing the foes. This Soma runs in streams to heaven and other worlds, and roars while he flows forth. This Soma, the chief of Yajna, unconquered, goes invisibly to many worlds.

Born for Gods in the beginning, this green hued Soma, flows through the wool. This same Soma, the doer of many noble deeds from the very birth, flows forth in streams, purifying and giving food. Just as a hero goes in fast chariots, so does Soma go to Indra's settled place. This Soma, performing many noble deeds for the Yajna, in which Gods are fed, flows on. The learned sacrificers

adom Soma, worthy to be adomed, the giver of abundant food. The learned men urge and lead him to the sacred place along the sanctified paths. The lord of liquids and streams, the speedy Soma, is led by priests adorned with gold ornaments, shedding rays like the Sun. Nodding his horns in the heaven like a bull, leading a herd, Soma performs mighty deeds. He, advancing through various rough stages, marches on and drops into the vat. The ten fingers urge him on his course, him who is gold-hued, well-armed and the best source of joy.

This Soma, mighty and pressed out flows to the vat through the long wool of the sheep. The fingers of the learned sacrificers urge the expressed green-hued Soma to Indra for his drink. He, like a hawk settles down amidst the families of men, like a lover speeding to his love. This Soma, the exhilerating juice looks down from heaven, like a child from the lap of his mother. The Soma, the green-hued juice, pressed out for joy goes roaring unto the vat, the well-beloved place. The gold-adored ten fingers, cleanse Soma skilfully for acquiring the gladdening drink. This powerful, omniscient, lord of minds, nourisher of all, urged by the learned men, flows fast to the woollen vat. This Soma effused for the Gods, pervading all the places, flows forth to the vat. The immortal, the best drink of the Gods, slayer of the foes, the Soma shines in his place. Urged by the ten fingers, roaring on his way, flows the mighty Soma to the wooden vats. The rapturous, holy Soma lends light to the Sun in the heaven. This invincible lord of speech and might, sheltering all, this Soma soars high with the Sun. Ever praised, intelligent, beautiful, this Soma checking the foes, slays them. The conqueror of strength and winner of happiness, this Soma prepared for Indra, is poured out into the vat. Soma, the head of heaven, is expressed and cleansed in waters by the learned for the weal of the world. Ever conquering, never conquered, desiring kine, longing for gold, this Pavaman hath roared. The mighty, showerer of rains, tawny, purifying, this Soma reaches Indra in the heaven. This Soma powerful, most beloved of the Gods, remover of the sins, invincible, flows forth to the heaven.

The Soma, pressed out for the Gods, slaying the demons, flows on to the holy sieve. Sustainer, far-seeing, green-hued, this Soma,

flows roaring to the vat, his place of rest. This mighty, fiend-slayer, Soma flows forth into the long woollen siever. This Pavaman, established in the sacrifice of the learned, makes the Sun and the Dawn shine. This Soma the banisher of diseases, giver or strength, well pressed out, invincible, flows with speed like a courser running to the battle. This splendid, joyful Soma, urged by Adhvaryu, speeds on to the vats. He who reads the essence, the Pavaman hymns, collected by the seers, tastes all the relishing food, purified and sweetened by God Vayu's touch. For him, who reads the Pavaman hymns, the essenc of the Vedas, Saraswati pours forth milk, ghee and sweet water. The Soma verses of the Vedas are giver of happiness, bearer of fine fruit and showerer of rains. They from the essence of the Vedas, stored by the Rishis, an eternal elixir for the knower of Vedas.

May the Pavaman-hymns bestow on us this world and the next. May they, stored by the sages, gratify our desires! The purifying Pavaman wherewith the Gods ever purify themselves, with that, in thousand streams may the Soma-hymns purify us! The eternal Pavaman hymns grant final beatitude, and by their study one attains pure and holy food and immortality. May we approach with great reverence the most youthful Agni, kindled in the place of Yajna, invoked in the homes, vast, shining wonderously between the Earth and Heaven and spreading all around. That Agni, who is lauded in the homes, through his might overcoming all our misfortunes, preserve us and our princes from disgrace and afflictions. O Agni, thou art Varuna and Mitra. Learned men exalt thee with their hymns. Through thee may we gain abundant wealth. Do ye preserve us evermore with blessings. Indra, rich like a cloud in showers, waxeth strong with Vedic lauds. When the learned singers of hymns pronounce Indra, the end of a Yajna, they find all implements of the sacrifice useless. When the learned men magnify Indra with praise, they offer him their gifts.

On flow the splendid streams of Soma, giving joy, the great destroyer, the best rider of the car, gold-hued, in the company of Gods, praised with finest hymns. Pavaman, the giver of might, bestower of wealth and heroic strength, penetrates the whole world with its brilliant rays. The Soma, the best libation, pressed out and

cleansed with waters by Adhvarus, is friend of men. Sprinkle forth the same all around. Never conquered, fragrant Soma, being cleansed, flows through the wool. We enjoy thee being effused and mixed with milk. Pressed out, dear to Gods, the performer of sacrifice, pleasing to eyes, farsighted Soma flows all around. Like a king hath Soma green and tawny, roared. Being purified, passing through the wool, he speedily flows to his seat, like a hawk flying fast to his nest. Parjanya is the guardian of the mighty Soma-plant, who hath made the earth and mountain his home. Just as groomed steed goes forth to the battle, so do thou flow on all sides. O Soma, be gracious unto us, drive away all our distresses. Clad in butter, thou goest to thy place. All the wealth that has been and would be, with its full power belongs to Indra. Like a son we enjoy our share of wealth inherited from him, just as the beams of the Sun receive light from the Sun. Praise Indra, who is generous in granting us wealth and gifts. Propitious are the boons he gives. He urges himself to shower figts and satisfies the desires of his devotees. O Indra, grant us security against that whereof we are afraid. Help us, thou Indra, and drive away our foes! O liberal one, thou art verily the lord of our homes. On thee, of ample bounty, the lover of songs, we call with Soma drink.

Soma, thou art the embodiment of rapture, most strong at sacrifice, and giver of wealth. Flow thou in streams! Thou most delightful, the best gladdener, effulgent, art invincible and ever conquering! O Soma, pressed out with stones, come unto us roaring and bring splendid strength. Flow on, thou Soma in streams for the feast of Gods and reside in our Vats, full of joy. Thy streams delight and exalt Indra. The Gods drink of thee for immortality. O Soma, expressed and cleansed, come unto us showering rains from heaven and with wealth.

O Soma, flow thou in streams to the Gods for their feast. O excellently sweet, come to our vats and take thy seat. Thy swift streams full of joy exalt Indra. The Gods drink thee to gain immortality. Pressed out and cleansed, Soma, thou pour on us riches, light of knowledge and rains. The learned cleanse Soma through the fleece, the golden-hued and beloved of the Gods. His exhilarating juices gladden all the Gods. Him, the beloved of Indra.

the priests with their ten fingers press out and cleanse with waters, who is full of splendour and a friend of men. O Soma, thou art poured out for Indra, the Vritra-slayer to drink, and for sacrificers who give dakshina to the priests. O Soma, thou art pure and mighty like lightning, flow forth and sanctify our deeds so that we may acquire greater wealth and strength. They pressthem out and cleanse for attaining joy and food. The learned men adorn Soma, the green-hued, new born infant in the wooden vats. The Gods attain to well expressed and cleansed Soma, the annighilator of the foes. Just as the mothers nourish and strengthen their child, so let our lauds wax him strong, the gladdener of Indra! O adorable, pour blessings on our kine, pour on us many kinds of food and wealth and expand the sea, O Soma! Hie thee hither, O Indra to those who kindle the flame in the Yajna, O thou ever young and friend to us all. Great is their fuel, much their laud, large their supplies, whose friend is Indra ever young. Peerless in fight, the hero leads his warrior chiefs, whose friend is Indra ever young. Indra alone giveth glory to a mortal man who offers gifts. He is invincible and mighty. Whoever of the many worships thee with Soma, to him Indra giveth tremendous strength. O God, when will you listen to our songs of praise? When will thou trample upon, like a weed, the godless man, who hath no gift to offer? Those skilled in songs, sing thy praise, the expert chanters eulogise thee, Brahmans exalt thee, like a pole, O indra, doer of countless deeds. When a sacrificer goes from one ridge to another collecting Soma plant and fuel, his toils are taken note of by indra and he rushes with his attendants to the sacrifice. O Indra, Soma enjoyer, listen to our songs of praise, yoke thy pair of steeds, and hasten to us!

Glorify naught besides Indra, O friends, so shall no sorrow trouble you. Sing only mighty Indra's praise, sing it again and again. O learned ones, sing to him alone, who attracts all the worlds towards himself, is active like a bull, bounteous like a cow, he who is cause both of enmity and peac, munificent, most charitable, and the great protector, As chariots ever conquering, that bring wealth and afford protection, so do our hymns of praise reach Indra. The learned, like the rays of the Sun, the lovers of the sacrifice, attain everything whereupon they set their mind. Thou remover of our debts and

subduer of our enemies, pour bliss on us. O Pavaman, sustainer of the Sun, the support of the sky with thy might, thou hastens to pour rain on us. O Soma, the great, we rejoice in thee, effused and realized in a kingdom where all are equal, thou moverst about with thy might amidst the foes! O Lord of tranquility, flow thou forth, sweet one to Indra, Mitra, Pushan and Bhaga! Flow forth, thou divine strength giving juice, flow on to thy spacious, finest dwelling place; O Pavaman, let Indra and other Gods drink thy juices for wisdom and gladdening strength! Like the rays of the Sun, the Soma juices, flowing with spped, spread all around. None except Indra purify as does the Soma. Soma, like the child of those who press it out, is first shed and then blent with honey and drunk, which inspires the mind and gives happiness.

O well kindled Agni, thou bringest the Gods to him, who offers oblations and gifts to thee. I ever worship thee as thou are giver of beatitude. O sage, the preserver of our body, make the Yajna beneficial to the enlightened persons. I invoke Agni to this our sacrifice, him who is benevolent, sweet-tongued and to whom oblations are offered. Agni, come on thy most easy moving chariot, bringing the Gods and accomplish our sacrificial rites. May Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga and Savitar grant us bliss today with the rising of the Sun. May they guard our home well and bear us safely forward over distress! These self-effulgent Gods and their mother Aditi, whose laws are inviolate, are supreme rulers. May Soma gladden thee Indra, Be bounteous, O thunderer, and drive away the enemies of hymns! Crush under thy foot the niggard who offer no gifts. O mighty, there is none to equal thee. Thou art the lord of the expressed and the unexpressed Soma. Thou art the sovereign of all beings. Vigilant, learned, true, pransed with hymns, Soma hath settled in the vats. Him, the Adhvaru couples purify, the skilled leaders of sacrifice. He, purified and decked with the rays of the Sun, pervades both the Earth and Heaven. He, whose dear and pleasant streams protect a hero, also grant riches to a sacrificer, as a master to his servant. May, he the strengthener of Gods, self-increaser, the settler in the vats, showerer of rains, the handsome Soma, lead us to the place where our sires of old, who knew the path, went and found the light, the bellowing bull, so do

the songs of praise reach the reservior, the God's dwelling place. Flows forth Soma, being expressed and cleansed through the sheep's long wool, and enrobed in a new raiment, as it were. O men, engender Agni, seen from afar, lord of the home effulgent, all-pervading, from two sticks with the strength of your hands! The learned householders set Agni in their homes for all round protection, him who is eternal, beauteous to behold, mighty and ever revered. O ever youthful, enkindled so well, Agni, shine thou before us at the altar; to thee come continually all oblations and offerings. The Sun hath come revolving and sat in his place—before the mother Earth. Advancing through the Heaven. The radiance of the Sun, penetrating the body, facilitates the respiration. The mighty Sun illuminates the sky. The Sun shines all the day throughout the month. The Vedic verses are recited in his praise at dawn.

Let us chant a Vedic verse to Agni, to him who hears from afar! The eternal Agni preserves the life of charitably disposed men. May that most blissful Agni guard our wealth and family, and keep us safe from grief and sin! Yea, let men say, Agni is born, who slayeth enemies and winneth wealth in every battle. O Agni, yoke thy most excellent steeds, swift to bring thee to us. Come to us quickly with other Gods and drink of the Soma at the sacrifice. O Agni, the sustainer immortal, ever bright and effulgent, light others with thy never fading radiance. O learned men, do not expect an Adhvaru to beg, but give him gifts without being asked, let not sacrifice suffer for want of supplies. But drive away the dog and niggard men. Just as a son goes to his mother's lap, or a lover to his bride, so does Soma approach the vat to occupy his seat. The green-hued Soma, sustains both the worlds with his might, and flows forth to the vat to settle in his place. O Indra, since birth art thou foeless and without a rival, seeking friendship is battle. Thou findest not the wealthy to be thy friend, for they flushed with wine, the godless men, resort to violence, but when thou befriend thy devotees and subjects, the righteous men, they call on thee like a father. May hundreds and thousands of steeds yoked to thy golden car, O Indra, bring thee unto us to drink of the Soma juice! May thy two steeds with peacock tails and white backs, yoked to thy golden

chariot bring thee here to quaff the sweet Soma that renders us eloquent. O Indra, lover of the song, drink thou this Soma, full of rapture, expressed with exertion. This savoury juice is excellently sweet and joy giving. O learned men, press ye and pour out him, who is cleansed with water, dwells in wood, is praise-worthy and fast like a steed. Of thousand streams, showerer of rains, beloved of Gods, divine, rinsed and increased with water, the Soma is great celestial King.

May Agni, bright, kindled, served with oblations and hymns, eager to give wealth, slay our enemies dead. Thou set on the seat of eternal sacrifice, in the lap of mother earth, the father of the heaven, slays Vritra. O Agni, ever active, give progeny with wealth and food that it may shine to heaven. Cleansed and urged, the Pavaman hath pervaded the Gods. This God, expressed, flows forth singing to the vat like a milkman going to an enclosure holding cattle. O Sage, thou robed in fine raiment meet to wear in combat, pronouncing invocations like a seer, watchful, move about the Earth and the Heaven. Beloved Soma, born on earth, more famed than the famous, cleansed on the fleecy height above the vat, roars while purified. Thou art that who ever preserves us with blessings. Come let us glorify the mighty, pure Indra with pure Soma hymns and pure songs of praise. May he be gladdened with milk—blent Soma juices!

O Indra, come thou pure to us with thy pure powers. Pure God, send down thou wealth to us. O divine, pure keep us always happy. O Pure, give us pure wealth, pure Indra grant riches to thy worshippers. Pure God, thou dost strike the fiend dead, and giveth thou pure the pure food. We mortals, desirous of wealth meditate upon Agni's laud today, laud of him who touches heaven in the form of the Sun. He who is lord of the home, abides in the world of men, listens to our songs. That Agni alone giveth happiness. Thou Agni art spread widely forth, worthy to be chosen, Hotar-priest, through thee the sacrificers complete their Yajna.

The sacred Vedic verses reveal the secret essence of Soma, who dwells on triple heights and bestows life. Dwelling in the wood, he lavishes all kinds of riches and blessings life an ocean full of

treasure. O great hero, the best warrior, equipped with sharpened arms, invincible, the conqueror of the enemy, the fastest in speed, flow thou Soma winning riches. O Lord of vast dominion, spreading fearlessness, grant us heaven and earth with all their fullness. Thou roarest while striving to give us much food, wealth, water, sun and the light. O Indra thou art far-famed, prosperous, and lord of strength. Thou alone, the guardian of men, slayest the resistless foes. O Indra, the most wise, we verily seek thee now, craving thy bounty as our share, like a son to his sire. They protection is a great shelter. May thy favour reach us!

O Agni, we worship thee, the best performer of sacrifice, eternal Hotar-priest among the Gods, the most skilled in holy rites. I do praise Agni, who lets not the water fall, is beautiful and whose flames are holy. May he win us the favour of Mitra, Varuna and the Waters in the sky! O Agni, the man whom thou protects in the battle and gives strength, becomes the lord of lasting wealth. O Agni, subduer of the foe, no one can vanquish thy devotee, nay very glorious is his strength. May Agni, who pervades the mankind, the winner of fights, grant us riches and fame. The quick moving fingers ten, press out and purify the Soma. He, the gold-hued, son of Surya, flows fast to the vat like a fleet courser. Just as a child is suckled by his mother, or a youth unites with his love, so blent with milk flows Soma speedily to the vat, the settled place. Drink of the sweet Soma juice O Indra and enjoy yourself. Be our friend and sharer of the feast, let thy wisdom protect us well! With thy favours, may we still be strong. Cast us not down before the foe Guard and succour us eith thy protection, establish us in thy favours.

The seven milch-kine have shed their pure milk for this Soma. Four other worlds hath he created for his adornment while growing strong through the holy rites. When being offered in oblation with the recitation of vedic hymns, the celestial Soma, fills the Earth and Heaven and enrobes himself in the most lucid floods. The learned men know it by his grace. May those brilliant rays of Soma, which purifies the food and strength, be inviolate for both the eanimate and inanimate objects. For this is Soma welcomed as a king by the learned men. Lauded and urged to feast by hymns, the purified

Soma flows forth to Mitra, Varuna and Vayu and to Indra, the thunderer, mighty and car-borne hero. O divine Soma, shower on us the fine milch-kine, yielding abundant milk and the raiments that enrobe us meetly. Grant us, O God, gold, silver and chariot horses for our use. Bestow on us divine riches, the wealth contained on earth, and that health and strength wherewith we may enjoy all these possessions. O Indra, the peerless, when thou wast born to remove the darkness, thou did spread the earth and propped the heavens. Then was your Sun created and the sacrifice was produced for thee. Verily, thou art the Lord of all that is there and is yet to be. Thou filled the raw herbs with juices and established the Sun in heaven. Therefore, O learned men, sing ye the Brihad Sama in praise of Indra, thou hast drunk the juice which urges you to glorious deeds. Thou the master of bay steeds, art the giver of might, glory and all the pleasures. O God, giver of happiness, gratification, adorable, self- confident, immortal and subduer of the foes, may we obtain thy exhilarating drink. Thou art verily a great hero charitably disposed, and urger of men's desire to good deeds. Turn, thou O slayer of foes, the godless to ashes, like a vessel, sanctified in fire.

O Soma, pour down the rain upon us, pour a wave of water from the sky and abundant wholesome food! O Soma, flow forth with thine those purifying streams, whereby the cows and steeds might come to us. O God, most beloved of deities in the sacrifice, pour on us rain in floods from all sides. The learned man listen to thy roar and know it, O Soma. Thou grant us vigour and strength with thy streams flowing through the wool. The Pavaman flows forth, flashing out splendour as of old, and slaying wicked and ignoble beings. O learned men, offer oblations to Indra, who is all-knowing, wanders with speed, never retraces his steps and who fain would drink. O men, come ye nigh, with Soma juices and drinking vessels, to Indra, the great drinker of Soma, the mighty hero and lord of riches. O learned men, if you offer Indra freshly pressed out Soma, he the wise, slayer of the foes, all- knowing, would fulfil all your desires. O Adhvaru, give offering of Soma to Indra alone, for he protects you from all sides, from all violent and presumptuous foes.

O men, sing ye the laud of Soma, the golden-hued, independent of might, the Red, who soars to the heaven with his own might. O Adhvarus, purify through the wool and blend with milk, the Soma, pressed out with stones by the rapid moving hands. Come ye nigh to Soma with humble homage, mix it with the curds and then offer it in libation to Indra. O God, foe-slayer, the seer, mighty and quick, fulfilling the desires of Gods, pour down happiness on kine and other cattle. Thou, the knower of the heart, lord of the heart, art expressed and effused in the vat, so that Indra may drink and be glad. O Pavaman grant us riches and manly strength, with Indra, our ally. O Sun, thou alone exaltest Indra, the hero renowned for his riches, showerer of rains and who works for men by hurling his thunderbolt. He, with thunderbolt, his weapon, shattered the ninety-nine cloud-castles of the fiends and slew Vritra. He, our benefactor and friend and help whereby we may gain kine and wealth for ourselves. Give us, O Agni, secure and vast riches in steeds and kine, cleanse and purify the sky and moisten the air. Thou hast created, O God, the Sun, the eternal source of light, and other stars and constellations, a great boon to men. O Agni, thou art the most beloved of the subjects, the best, seated in thy place, giver of knowledge. Thou givest longevity to thy worshipper! Agni, the head and height of heaven, is the nourisher of the Earth. He knows the seeds of our actions. Yea, Agni, thou art lord of bliss and the cholicest gifts. I, thy devotee, seek refuge in thee. O Agni, thy pure, brilliant, effulgent, blazing high, upward going flames magnify thy glory.

O Agni, who is thy kin amongst men? Who honours thee with sacrifice? Who art thou? One whom dependent? Thou art verily the kinsman of mankind, their well-beloved friend, a friedn whom friends may supplicate. Bring Mitra, Varuna and other Gods here to our great Yajna, bring them, O Agni, to thine place. Worthy to be sung and worshipped, dispeller of darkness, finder of the path, showerer of the desires, the cause of rain, Agni is kindled well in sacrifice. Agni, the fulfiller of all desires, is kindled well, like a courser of a hero desiring victory in war. The devotees pray unto him with oblations. O giver of joys, soft- hearted through prayers, we the sacrificers kindle thee, the effulgent and great. O effulgent

Agni, thy blazing flames rise high when thou art kindled! O Pavaman, may my ladles full of clarified butter reach thee. May you accept our prayers and offerings! I pray to Agni, the giver of joy and fruits of our actions, worthy to be invoked in every season, wonderfully lustrous, rich in many ways, may he hear my prayer. Agni protect us with one, protect us with the second, protect us with the third, protect us with the three Vedas. O lord of might, effulgent, guard us by all the four Vedas! We seek thy help O God, the nearest friend and brother for our weal and that of Gods. Preserve us, thou each fiend, who offers no gift, save and succour us in every strife!

O effulgent, revolving, radiant Agni, thou art mighty and terrific, pervading all, giver of wisdom. Thou transforms dark Night into shining Dawn with thy radiance. Having swept away the gloom with thy radiance and bringing forth the Dawn, the great Sire's daughter, thou holds the Sun aloft in the sky. Rising with the coming of Dawn, he like a lover follows the blessed Dame. He, of vast radiance, spreading far and wide, enrobes the night with white-radiant robes.

With what words should we laud thee, Agni, omniscient, praiseworthy son of strength! O son of Might, with what may we serve thee? What reverent world shall we speak? So then, dost thou prepare for us all the happy dwellings and reward our hymns with wealth and corn. O Agni, come here with other Gods, we choose thee as our presiding priest. Thou, best of the priests to occupy the sacred seat, may the proferred ladle full of oblation please thee. O Son of Strength, ladles of oblations are poured forth for thy realization. We pray unto him who is foremost in the Yajna, the guardian of might and food, and whose flames blaze with ghee. May our hymns of laud reach him, who is handsome and effulgent with snake like piercing and shining flames. May our oblations full of devotion attain him, much lauded, for our help. May our speech attain the Son of strength, praiseworthy and giver of knowledge for gaining precious gifts, him, who is immortal, and known among men with his two aspects: as the bringer of Gods from all sides and the giver of sweet foods. Agni, the invincible, moves ahead of his mortal subjects. He is ever new and fast, like a chariot in conveying

oblations. A charitable man gains a dwelling from him whose flames are pure, through his oblations to him. Agni, the subduer of enemy forces, the priest of Gods, invincible, is the embodiment of all kinds of foods. May Agni worshipped and satiated, grant us bliss. Let our sacrifices and lauds to him, bring us bliss! O Agni, grant us the determined mind, wherewith success is achieved in strifes. Bring down the manly strength of the foe; we worship thee for the attainment of desired victory.

Give us, O Agni, thou Son of strength and lord kine and riches, great wealth and abundant food, O enlarger of our intellect! He, the effulgent, one of the eight Vasus, the most wise Agni, must be prayed with Vedic hymns. O multi-flamed, grant us wealth of many kinds. O Agni, thou of sharp flamed teeth, burn the wicked to ashes by night and when the Dawn appears. O men, longing for food, for ye I glorify Agni with songs, the dear friend, the beloved guest of every home. The sacrificers adore Agni with libations of ghee, praise of songs and gifts. They serve him like Mitra. Much lauded Agni, who conveys oblations to heaven, is over in the service of Gods. I praise Agni, the pure, effulgent, steadfast, wise, bringer of the Gods, kindled with fuel. We implore him with devotion for favour, the sage, guileless, charitable and protecting Lord. O Agni, men have made thee their envoy, offering-bearer to Gods in every age, O immortal and blissful God. They worship thee, who pervades all the fuel, is ever watchful, awakening, mighty and lord of the home. O Agni, thou adorning both Gods and men, moves about Earth and Heaven as envoy of Gods. We lay claim to thy regard and gracious care. May thou be kind to us as thrice protecting friendly guard. O Agni, our sacred hymns, like the wives of sacrificers, reach thee in the atmosphere. That Agni is indeed laudable whose three fold sacred grass is spread unbound and in whom even the waters find rest His aspect is beauteous like that of the Sun. He showers bliss with his unconquerable aids.

O Indra, the learned singers praise thee for their satisfaction. The sages sing thy glory in Vedic hymns, thou eternal! Indra increases the manly-strength of Soma juices for full enjoyment, and so living men today, even as of old, sing forth their laud to his majesty. O Indra and Agni, the skilled singers, with songs laud you. I too

chosse you both to bring me food. O Gods, ye both shook down together, with one mighty deed the ninety forts hled by the foe. O Indra and Agni, to ye both reach the learned dman in the wake of the sacred Law, through their righteous acts. O Indra and Agni, your powers work in harmony, ye both urge the rain to pour down. O hero, the giver of fruits of actions, we pray unto thee to grant us glorious fame with thy all protecting aids. May we follow thee, O giver of wealth, etc. Indra, thou art increaser of our horses and and multiplier of our kine, like a deep well full of effulgence. None can impair the gift laid up in thee. Thou grant me whatever I seek. Come to thy devotee, O Indra, and grant him knowledge, wealth, etc. Grant, thou kine and steeds to make us rich! O Maghvan thou bestowest many hundred, yea, many thousand gifts on thy devotee who with Vedic verses, seek thy favour and protection, O shatterer of forts. We send forth our hymns of praise, like first vessels filled with Soma juice, to Agni, who is Hotar-priest of men, who grants wealth and bliss. O God, thy devotees and votarles, the charitable men, adore thee with their songs of laud, like a horse drawing a chariot. Thou, mighty lord of men, bestows wealth both on sons and grandsons!

O Varuna, listen and accept this call of mine. Grant me happiness today, desiring help I pray to thee! O fulfiller of desires, with what aid dost thou delight us? With what help dost thou bring riches to thy worshippers? We call on thee, Indra alone, in sacrifice, in battle we seek thy aid that we may win spoil. With his glorious might hath Indra spread out the Heaven and Earth, with his might hath he lighted up the Sun. In him all creatures abide, in him abide the expressed Soma. O creator of all, bring thyself here, strenthened by oblations, it is thine own sacrifice! Let others in ignorance live in folly, but let us perform the Yajna to completion here! Just as the Sun with his flood of light pouring forth on the earth. engulfs and makes things shine with his seven coloured rays, so does Soma shine forth cleansed with waters. Soma, thou discovered the treasure of Panis. Thou deckest thyself in thy home with the mother-like nourishing sun-rays. As the Vedic hymns recited in a sacrifice are heard, as it were from afar, so does thy splendour purify even from distance. Thou nourishes corn with thy rays that

sustain the three worlds. Grant us. O Pushan, cattle horses, abundant wealth and wisdom for our protection. O Maruts, the real heroes, mark ye well the sweat of him who toils, and him who worships thee with hymns! May these Sons of immortality listen to our hymns of praise, and be extremely gracious to us. O pure Heaven and Earth, we glorify ye both with our lofty song of praise. Ye both sanctify each other by your own strength and remain in your respective places. Ye both ever further the Yajna. Ye both great ones, promote sacrifice, sit ye around our Yajna! Just as a pigeon turns to his mate, so do we approach Indra, who listens to the prayer of his subjects. O hero, guardian of wealth that gives happiness, praised in hymns, may wealth and fame be ours, who sing thy laud. O lord of several powers, for our protection in this conflict, be over us. We shall talk together for other fights.

O speech, recite Vedic verses at the place of sacrifice, that the cars of the listeners be purified. The sweet Soma is pressed out with stone and poured into the vat. The sages drain the fount with reverence. Let us have no fear, nor be tired in the friendship of mighty Indra. Thy actions are grand and praiseworthy. May we glorify them. O men, on his left side reclines Indra favourably. The Soma juice, blent with the honey of the bee is ready. Quickly come hither, haste and drink. The charity of this Indra does never harm but always does good. O lord of wealth, may these songs of laud exalt thee. The sages, pure and lustrous like sacred fire, have sung these in thy praise. This Indra spreads himself like an ocean, when showers riches in horses, kine and corn like a full steaming cow. May the effulgent Sun drink the sweet Soma juices, he who grants longevity to sacrificers, uges the wind to blow, nourishes the subjects well, protects them from all sides and pour forth light. The lustrous, mighty, well nourished, sustainer of heavens, showerer of rain and corn, steadfast, subduer of the wicked, killer the demons, dispeller of the darkness, the mighty aid in overcoming the foe, is the radiance of the Sun. This radiance, the best of radiances, the winner of the world, conquering wealth, all-illuminating, the scorcher, the eternal, subduer of all, mighty as the Sun to see, spreads wide.

O Indra, give us wisdom as a sire gives riches to his son. O much

invoked, guide us in this our path, may we ever receive thy light! May we not be overpowered by unknown, malevolent, unhallowed and mighty enemies. May we, with thy help, O hero, in thy obeisance, cross over all the pains and sufferings of the world. Protect us, O Indra, each today, each tomorrow and each following day. Thou preserves, thy singers, O lord, through all the days, both by day and night! O lord, doer of many actions, both thy arms are the fulfiller of desires. They wield the thunderbolt to quell the wicked. Thou art dissolver of the universe, exceedingly mighty, passing rich, charitable, all- pervading and lord of the subjects! We, the charitable unmarried men, engaged in devotion and sacrifice, longing for wives and yearning for sons, call upon the omniscient God. Yea, the most dear amid dear speeches, sever-sistered, loved by the sages of lod, the Vedic speech, hath earned our praise. May we attain the excellent glory of Savitar, the divine God. May he inspire our intellects. O Lord, make me the son of a sage, skilled in making all kinds of medicines, like an expert craftsman. O Agni, thou purifies our like, pour upon us food and strength and drive away from us the wicked men who are like dogs. May thy both Varuna and Mitra grant us heavenly and earthly riches. They are of great might. Desired strength and guileless divine Prana and Apana are obtained and increased through Yajna. Prana, and Apana, which make the heavens rain and nourish the corn, pervade the universe. O Agni, the Hotar-priest of our rites, ordained by Gods, bring thou the Gods here and complete our Yajna. O Agni, thou most wise in rites, thou knowest all the paths, thou God showest the path with thy might urging thy followers on. O Sage, the mighty lord of sacrifice, thou completest our Yajna. Thou art verily the source of every being and the Sire of power in action.

Pour forth the juices blent with milk, which go quickly to heaven and earth; offer libation to Agni. The priests know well their abiding place of Yajna and come their like the kine with their calves. In all the worlds. He was the best and highest whence sprang the mighty one of splendour. No sooner did he bore than he smote the foe, he in whom all who aid him are joyful. Mighty of strength, he strikes terror in the hearts of his foes. Longing to win the animate and inanimate, he is praised at feast and sacrifices. All

men meditate on thee with their mental vigour, when they are doubled and tripled with the birth of sons and grandsons. Blend the sweeter with the sweetest. Gain quickly with our sweet that sweet which Indra bestows. He who enjoys Soma juices and barley is verily mighty, great and capable of facing three types of challenges. Let him urge us for performing great deeds. He, with his wisdom, vigour and chivalry scores victory by his heroic deeds, subduing the wicked. He granteth splendid wealth to his devotees. He resplendent and mighty overcame the foe in the battle and filled the heaven and earth with his majesty while waxing strong. One libation he has enjoyed, the other he has left for Gods. O Indra enlighten us! May true Soma attend upon true Indra!

Laud Indra, O man, with thy speech, as he is known the guardian of the kine, the son of truth and lord of the virtuous. In the sacrifice where the sacred grass is spread, the green-hued Soma is offered in oblation, whereing we sing our songs of praise to Indra. For him the thunderer, the kine have yielded sweet milk to be mingled with juices, which he cherishes exceedingly. O men, draw nigh to Indra, worthy to be involved in every strife. Come, thou most mighty foe-slayer, worthy of our laud, come unto us and our rites. O Indra, thou art the primodial giver of bounteous gifts, thou art true lord of thy devotees. Let us claim alliance with thee, the mighty son of strength and the lord of riches. The learned have realized from the great depth of the heaven the old celestial Soma, the praiseworthy, the joy of Indra. They praise him with their songs, at his birth. Certain learned men, seeing the radiant, celestial, waterborne Soma from afar, sing his praise. Savitar open up the heavens to spread it on all sides. Just as a bull is supreme among the herd of kine, so dost thou, O Pavaman, shine with thy might over this earth, heaven and all that exists. O Agni, graciously convey our latest song of praise of our oblation to the Gods. O resplendent God thou givest givest gifts to thy devotees like an ocean just as canals issue forth from a big river. Give us a share of wealth that is found in all the three worlds. I have obtained from my Father the deep Vedic knowledge, and have become effulgent like the Sun. After the ancient tradition, I like the sage beautify the hymns of Veda, whereby I gain strength. Whether praised by seers or not praised by

the godless, wax thou strong, O Indra, when praised by me.

O Agni, kindled friction of the sticks by strength, accept our prayers with all thy fires, with those that are with Gods, with those that are with men, and exalt our hymns! May that Agni come unto us with all his fires, with all his riches for us, for our sons and grandsons. O Agni, thou with thy fires, increases our sacrifice and food. Thou urges other Gods for our sacrifices and wealth. O Soma, the men who trim the sacred grass for a sacrifice, pray thee for fame and strength. So, O hero grant us renown and heroic power. Just as a man digs a well with his hands, so thou, O Soma, hast dug for us as it were a well with thy force, a perennial source of water to drink. O Soma, thou hast created the deathless Sun for mortal men, to maintain the Law and loveliness. Thou evermore hast made wealth flow to us. O men, pour out Soma, the sweet juices for Indra to drink, for him who sends forth his bounteous gifts through his majesty. I seeking thy refuge pray unto thee O Indra, O giver of wealth and guardian of life, listen to him who sings thy praise. Never was any hero before thee mightier than thou, none certainly is like thee in riches and praise. The God Agni desires full libation poured to him. So pour ye out, and then fill the vessel again full. The Agni will immediately convey your oblations. The Gods made Agni the watchful Hotar-priest of the sacrifice most wise and conveyor of oblations. He grants heroic strength and riches to his devotee, a charitable man.

The most learned dedicate their acts to Agni, the enkindled God, the best prosperer of the sacrificers. May our songs of praise reach this well-kindled Agni. O sacrificers, praise him with songs, who wins thousands at sacrifice and before whom men shrink when he performs his deeds. Agni, with his splendour, dwelling high in heaven, comes with his might like the Sun, spreading all around the mother Earth. O Agni, thou pourest life, send down upon us food and manly strength, drive thou misfortunes far away! Established before the five classes of priests, the purifer Pavaman, is he to whom we pray and whose wealth is great. O Agni, skilled in thy work, pour down on us manly strength and wealth that nourishes. O Purifying divine Pavaman, call the Gods, with thy pleasant and flaming tongue and worship them! O full of radiance, bringer of

oblations to the Gods, thou urgest all the luminous bodies. Bring here the Gods to the banquet. O luminuous Agni, mighty, feasting on oblations, we kindle thee in our sacrifices. O adorable, effulgent God, favour us with all thy aids in our sacrifices resounding with Vedic hymns. Give us desired wealth, wealth which is ever victorious and invincible Grant us, O God, pleasant wealth that supports and nourishes life of all for ever, thy favour that we may have longevity!

May our prayers urge Agni forth as a steed is urged in the battle, whereby we may win great wealth. O Agni send us forth thy protection wealth, pure and strength-giving foods, yea and the Sun. May the Soma, drink, beent with milk, pure and sparking, gladden Indra. The Soma juice hath been shed forth for Indra, the demon-slyer, and for the hero, the giver of guerdon, who sit at the altar. O friends, may ye and we attain this resplendent God, who is so fragrant and whose proximity is a great strength. They filter Soma through the long fleece, the tawny, golden-hued, dear to all, him who flows on the the Gods with his exhilarating juices! O all-pervading what mortal will attack thee? None! But a devotee of thine longs to offer reverently Soma oblation to thee on the day of Yajna. Urge thou, the mighty ones in battle, who give treasures in charity dear to thee. May we, with thy aid, O lord, pass through all troubles and afflictions! O Adhvaru pour forth the nourishing and gladdening juice, so that the hero who ever prospers us is praised and gratified. O horse-borne lord, none can attain the praise due to you either by might or goodness. We, longing for fame, invoke this God of yours, the lord of wealth, whoever promotes our weal through constantly made sacrifices.

Laud him, the lord of bliss, the envoy of Gods, who bears oblations to the deities. Laud thou O singer, Agni, the great giver, effulgent with flames, eternal, him who is offered Soma in oblation and who bears offerings. O Soma, expressed with stones, urged to flow through the woollen filters, thou enters the vat to settle, as a hero who enters a fort having conquered it. He is filtered through fine long wool on the vat by the learned priests. He is of manly strength like a bull and a courser and one who gladdens. We, the learned men have in the past been making Indra to drink to his fill, he the

bearer of thunderbolt. Today as well, bring him the juice expressed in the Yajna, and let him be adorned. Even a thief or a dacoit who way-lays, becomes subservient to his dictates. May he graciously accept this our praise and come to us with his wonderous wisdom! O Indra and Agni, in your deeds of might ye adorn heaven's lucid realms. Renowned is this strength of yours. To ye both Indra and Agni go forth our hymns along the path of sacred law. O Gods, your powers work in harmony to lead us forth. Ye both urge us to righteous acts. Who knows what strength Indra wins by drinking Soma juices with other Gods? He, then being satiated with Soma, breaks down the forts in its ecstasy. As a wild elephant in rut, rushes on, this way and that way, and none can check him, so don thou O Indra roam about unrestrained. May he come unto us when Soma is ready. He who is of great might, invincible, ever ready to win the battle, steadfast, Indra Maghvan, when he listens to his devotees call, he will tarry not, but come soon!

The strengthening, pure, sparkling Soma is poured forth in libation with the recitation of Vedic hymns. Bright Soma is effused upon the mountains and the earth from the heaven. The swift, sparkling and beauteous Soma flows on driving all the wicked afar! Foe-subduers, sin-removers, equally victorious, invincible, giver of strength, Indra and Agni, I invoke here. O Indra and Agni, skilled singers in Vedic hymns, bring ye lauds! I choose ye both for strength. Together ye both, with one mighty action shook the ninety forts which the demons held. O Agni, kindled by strength, beauteous in visage, we recite Vedic hymns at the place of sacrifice, while offering oblation. To thee we have come seeking refuge, as to the shed from scorching heat, Agni, who shines like gold. Mighty as a hero who slays with shafts, or like a bull with sharpened horns, Agni, thou shatters down the enemy forts! We worship Agni, the lord of all, truthful, effulgent, eternal and master of Yajna. He, who spreads all around, lends the light to heaven, lord of strength, reveals the seasons. Agni, the primeval cause of what has been and shall be, shines forth is soverign lord in his various manifestations.

The wise Agni in the way of old, beautifying his body, is exalted by the learned priests. Here, in this happy sacrifice, I invoke Agni,

the Son of strength, whose flames are pure and blazing. O Agni, worthy of reverence from friends, pure and bright, seat thyself with others Gods in this our sacrifice. O Soma thy streams flow slaying the wicked. Sweep away, thou, the enemy forces that entertain rivalry with us! I conquering the battle with thy aid, where wealth is at stake, and car meets car, with fearless heart I sing thy laud. No evil-minded dare assail this Pavaman's holy Law. Thou crush him who is rapturous, tawny-hued and giver of felicity. Come, O Indra here, riding thy by steeds who possess tails like peacock's plumes. None can check thy course. Thou overcomest the opposing forces, as a fowler captures the bird, or as an archer subdues the foe! Indra, the fort- renderer, cloud dispeller, the foe-slayer, the rider of the chariot drawn by a team of bay steeds, he shatters even things that stand most firm. As the pools, deep and full, feed the ocean, as a cowherd feeds his cows well, so dost thou nourish the earth. As the milch-kine turn to the fodder, and streams flow to the sea, so dost thou reach the sacrifice. Just as a thirsty deer resorts to the pool of water, so shold thou come to us quickly to drink thy fill. May the Soma juice gladden thee, O Indra, and gain thy favour for him who pours it. Thou enjoyest the juices shed in the sacrifice and thereby waxeth exceedingly strong. O mighty God, thou blessest the mortal man. O Indra there is no comforter except thee. Indra I speak to thee. O God, let never thy bounteous gifts and protecting aids fail us! Thou lover of man, pour out to us all the riches.

This Dame, beauutiful and bright, the daughter of Heaven, hath appeared after her sister, the Night. The Dawn, red in colour, beautiful, holy and the mother of the rays of light, became the Ashvin's friend. O Dawn, thou art verily the friend of Ashvins, the mother of beams art thou, and the ruler over wealth. The beautiful lady, the wonderful dear Dawn, the daughter of Heaven, shines forth scattering darkness. I praise ye high Ashvins. O ye both sons of Ocean, virtuous, mighty mighty and wise ones, give us much wealth through our prayers! Your team of steeds course through the limitless sky like the birds. O Dawn, possesser of good foodstuffs, bestow upon us that wonderous good fortune wherewith we may support our sons and grandsons. O luminous noble lady, possessor of cows and steeds, uttering words true and sweet and doing noble

deeds, bestow upon us good wealth. O Lady, enriched with wealth, yoke thy purple steeds to thy car now and cause us to enjoy felicities and delights! O Ashvins, destroyer of sufferings, do ye direct your car unto us, rich in cattle, spendour and gold. May the twins, who are divine and wonder- workers, bring us the rays of the sun, at rosy dawn for obtaining nourishment and peace. Ye both, who brought down the hymn from heaven, a light for men, do ye, Ashvins bring to us strength and food. Agni is the king, whom the milch-kine seek as their shed, whom the fleet-footed coursers resort as their stable. O Agni, pour forth food on those who sing thy laud. Agni, God of all, granteth steeds and wealth of men. He giveth readily and the best when pleased. Agni, give food to those who sing thy laud! He is Agni, the praised, to whom the kine go in herds, to whom the racers, swift of foot resort, and to whom our princes go, O lord give food to those who sing thy laud!

O lustrous Dawan awaken us today to ample wealth, as thou did awake us in the past. O beautiful. enchanting high-born, thou daghter of Heaven dawn on us today dispelling darkness as thou didest in the past. O sweet Ashvins, listen to my call, the laudatory Vedic praise your desire fulfilling, wealth-giving and beautiful course of conduct. Ashvins, lord of sweetness listen to my call. May I attain you and subde all my foes, O twain of the golden path, giver of happiness and bringers of rain! Come ye twain to us wearing precious ornaments. Ye Rudras, on your way of gold, promoting the Yajna, mighty and handsome, lord of sweetness listen and accept my invocation!

People kindle Agni with fuel to meet the Dawn, who cometh like a milch-cow. The flames of Agni rising from the altar soar high in atmosphere like branches of young trees shooting up. Agni, the Hotar-priest, has been kindled in the morning for Gods' worship. He, the pleasing God, rises erect in flames, his radiances frees the world from the gloom of night. Having kindled, he destroys the darkness with his pure flames, and then he is offered oblation with the right hand by the priests, which he drinks with his tongues erect. Dawn hath appeared, so wonderful and exceedingly bright, the fairest of the lights. Night has gone away, giving place to Dawn. The bright Dawn, the mother of the Sun hath come, and the

dark Night hath sought her own abode. Both akin and allied to the Sun, eternal succeeding each other and mutually effacing each other's complexion, traverse the heaven. They are sisters whose path is unending, they tread it alternately guided by the Gods, combined in purpose though of different visages. They obstruct not each other, nor do they tarry or stand still. The Sun, the bright face of the Dawn, is shining, the recitation of the Vedic hymns has begun. O Ashvins, borne on your car, come you here to our brimming fresh libations. The twain, the frequent guests, scorn not the profeered thing, they are already beside us. They come with speed with their aids, the best guardian of their devotees. Come ye both at early morning, at noon of day, and when the Sun is setting, by day, at night, with most auspicious favour. Not only now.

The Dawns have spread their banner of light over the world, in the eastern portion of the firmament brightening all things, like heros brandishing their weapons in the fight. They, the radiant and progressive mothers of the earth, travel daily on their course. The purple beams of the Dawns have already shot up, they have yoked the red kine. They have made their pathways, as of yore; red-rayed, they have attended upon the glorious sun. The dawans sing like women engaged in their daily tasks, resorted to by thousands of seers for strength. Real is his majesty, and it is admired at solemn rites and in sacrifices where singers rule.

The Lord of Vedas is he to whom all Aryas are devoted and the world belong. This Vedic knowledge hidden in him, the lord of speech, and leader of men, is revealed to thee. The learned and active sacrificers have sung a song of praise to Indra, expressing sweet juices, that he may shower on them riches, manly strength and filtered Soma. Flow forth to us, O Pavaman, expressed, with wealth in kine and horses and grant our cattle beautiful visage. O Lord of green juice, Soma celestial, lend us splendour as does a friend to friend! Be thou gracious to men! Let us have thy friendship of old. Sweep far away from us the godless fiends, and drive away the false afar! The learned find Soma in streams and balm it with honey. They press it out, cleanse with their fingers and enjoy the juice as it flows like a courser. O learned, skilled in songs, sing to Soma, which flows on like a mighty stream. He

glides like a serpent from his slough and runs like a playful flying horse. Foremost, King, watery, set among the worlds, a measure of dates, he, beautiful, mighty- effulgent, riding a car of light, showers wealth.

O Agni, the Son of strength, accept this prayer of ours, and this our recitation, with all thy fires! Though we worship every God through our sacrifice, but every oblation is offered only to thee. May he, the nourisher of his subjects, promoter of the Yajna, effulgent adorable, be our beloved. And, may we, the sacrificers, love mutually one another! For you and for us, we call upon Indra, the most high, through Agni. May he be ours and none others. O Indra, showerer of all gifts simultaneously, unclose the door of emancipation to us, obedient to thee. Thou art indeed irresistible O lord! As the strong bull leads on the herd so he the showerer of happiness, stirs the men with his might. He is irresistible ruler who fulfils all noble desires. O Agni! send us thy bounteous gifts, with thy wonderous protecting aids. Thou art hero and lord of wealth, give safety to our progeny! Thou prosper our sons and grandsons with thy guarding powers, inviolate, never negligent! Keep far away from us all celestial wrath. O Agni, and wickedness of godless men! O all- pervading with what name shall I describe them? Thou defies description! But hide not from us thy Vishnu from, nor keep it secret, since thou did wear another form in battle. O God, pervading all, I, skilled in rules, praise thee, worthy of invocation. Yea, I, poor and weak praise thee, the mighty, who dwells in the realm beyónd this region. O all-pervading lord, unto thee I offer my oblation. Let this offering please thee. May these eulogise of nine exalt thee. Do ye preserve us evermore with blessings! O Wind-god, I offer thee the main and most seet oblation in this sacrifice. O mighty, come thou in haste riding thy steed-drawn chariot to enjoy the Soma drink! O Vayu and Indra, ye both art worthy drinkers of these juices for unto ye both flows the Soma, as do the waters flow to the low plains. Ye mighty twain, lord of strength, come unto us for our protection, and for a drink, riding your fast chariot.

Then Soma, pressed out after night, enterest into mighty deeds, when the rays of the Sun impel the golden-hued to flow in streams.

We purify this gladdening juice, which Indra in great quantity drinks. The same Soma which kine took in their mouth, and the sage of old and even now drink. The purified Soma they praise with ancient Vedic hymns sitting around. They then supplicate him with hymns bearing the names of the Sun, Pushan, Aryaman and other Gods. With homage, O Agni, I rever thee like a long-tailed steed, thou lord of sacred sacrifice. May the mighty, vast, fast of speed, showerer of rain, our friend, borne of fuel sticks, be ours! Roaming everwhere, thou Agni, protect us from wicked and sinful men from near and far away. O Indra, thou art the subduer of the foes in our battles with the hostile host. Thou art our Sire, all-conquering, the subduer of the curse, the victor of the violent. O Indra, the Earth and Heaven cling close to thy victorious might, as do father and mother to their child. When thou attackest Vritra, all the hostile forces shrink and faint, O Indra, at thy wrath. The sacrifice, expanding in the atmosphere, waxes Indra strong, the showerer of rain, nourishes the Earth. Indra expanded the sky and realms of light in rapturous joy of Soma, when he cleft the demon. Revealing the hidden kine, he drove them forth and flung the fiend headlong down. Call Indra for succour, the everconquering God of yours, him who is sung in our praises. He is the hero, whom none can conquer, the Soma enjoyer, ever invincible, the commander of resistless armies, O Indra, bring wealth for us, omniscient, praised in our psalms; project our riches, got in spoil!

That lofty strength and might of thine, the intelligence and matchless thunderbolt of thine, are sharpened by our prayers. The Heaven and Earth augment thy force and fame, the mountains and rivers sing thy laud. O thou, great abode of beings, Vishn, Mitra and Varuna praise thee, the Maruts get strength in thy company. O Agni, God, thy devotees sing thy praise for strength. Strike thou the foe with terror and disease! O Agni, grant us wealth and kine. O multiplier, multiply us! In the great battle desert us not, Agni, like one bearing a load who castes it aside before the destination is reached. Win the foe and thereby win us wealth! All men and subjects make obeisance to Indra, as rivers bow themselves to the

sea. Indra severed the head of demon Vritra with his mighty thunderbolt. That might of Indra was displayeed when he brought the Heaven and Earth together, like a skin. O beauteous Indra, come unto us, this happy pair of steeds that draws thy car, are approaching us. O men, bend ye down your heads, for Indra stands amidst water-bearing clouds, pointing the path with his ten fingers.

The priests prepare excellent Soma juice for Indra, for the mighty hero's joy! A team of two steeds, urged by our hymns, will bring Indra, our friend, here in our Yajna. May he who slays Vritra, drink Soma, and helping us in hundred ways, come to us and stay not afar! May our heart flow unto thee as the river flows into the sea! O Indra, nought emulates thee! Thou watchful Indra, by thy might has obtained Soma offering, which is now inside thee. O Vritra slayer, let this Soma be enough for you, may it be enough for the three worlds! O Agni, knowable through hymns, help him who knows thee. We sing thy praise for the completion of the sacrifice. May this or God, great, limitless, smoke-bannered, bliss-giving, urge us to holy thought and wisdodm! May Agni, like some rich lord of men, the banner of the Gods, refulgent, listen to our songs of praise! O men, sing in unison, the praise of him, the hero, much invoked, the slayer of foes, Indra, the giver like the Earth! He witholdeth not his generous gifts in kine and strength, when he hath heard our songs. May Indra go to godless man's stall of cows and unclose it with his might for us. He created the earth, mid-region and heaven and pervaded all. He thus sustains the whole universe. He, the guardian of the three worlds, the immortal, all-pervading, sustains the creation with his threefold power. Look ye on his wonderful creation, whereby the man performs all his rites. He the God is the worthy friend of mankind. The learned evermore see God, the all pervading, within themselves, as men see the great Sun in the sky. Only the sages, devoted to God, ever active, attain Him, the all-pervading to be attained by all. May the sages help and favour us by making us know the God, the Creator of the worlds, who sustains all.

O God, let none, not even thy devotees, delay thee far away from us. Come to our sacrifice, if already here, listen to our prayer! Just as the flies collect on honey, so do priests collect around the sacrifice and offer oblations to thee. Just as a hero desirous of riches set his foot upon a car, so do the learned men, craving wealth, rest their hope on thee, O men, sing ye the praise of Indra. Recite the eternal Brihat-sama Verses, that he may enlarge your intellects. Indra hath given a great store of kine, land, along their common path bringing, every kind of wholesome food, doing acts of service, and destroying all the sufferings of their charitable devotees. As the Agni is kindled, the radiant Sun rises, and the magnificent joyous Dawn encompasses the world with her radiance. The Sun hath roused the world in sundry ways. The twin Ashvins have harnessed their team for the course. O Ashvins, may your car be swift and smooth. Come unto us with your chariot laden with food and wealth. May your presence be auspicious to uuus and to all bipeds and quardrpeds. O Pavaman, thy never failing streams flow forth like showers of rain on earth from heaven, which bring abundant wealth. Thou flowest on thy way observing all beloved sacred lore, shattering all obstacles. He, cleansed and adorned sits like a sovereign or a hawk in the wood. So bring thou hiterward to us, O Soma Pavaman, while being cleansed, all heavenly and terrestrial treasures.

Flow fowth the streams of power of this Soma, the mighty one shed, who waits upon the Gods. The learned Adhvarus, the doer of noble deeds, praise with their songs the effulgent, adorable Soma while being cleansed. O opulent, adorable, Soma, thy halos, while they purify thee, are pleasant. Thou, praiseworthy, fill full the sea of bliss! This Brahman, the bringer of different seasons, famed as Indra, him I praise. O lord of strength, to thee alone go forth all praise sung by skilled singers. Like streams on their path, so let bounties flow to thy devotees from thee. We approach thee for help as to a car. O Indra, subduer of the foe, mighty, doer of many deeds, lord of the brave. Great in power and wisdom, in intelligence comprehending all, thou Indra, pervades all with thy majesty. Thou art a mighty God, whose both hands wield the thunderbolth and other weapons that stretch wide on the earth. May

that Agni, swift like the steed, effulgent, of many forms, brilliant like the Sun, promote our Yajnas. The twice- born, envoy of the Gods, spread with his radiance in all the three realms, the foremost priest, he is Agni in whom waters abide. The twice-born priest Agni pervades all the best things for the sake of glory. He who offers oblation to this Agni, hath fine sons. O Agni, we awaken thee with hymns of praise, thou offering-bearer to the Gods like a courser, auspicious and servicable. Thou art verily the lord and promoter of a real and big sacrifice of noble, learned and charitable person. Radiant like the Sun, Agni, come to us with all thy manifestations, through these hymns of praise!

O Agni, eternal, radiant, gift of Dawn, give thou this day ample wealth to him who rises early in the morning to pay oblations to the Gods. Thou art indeed the envoy of Gods, their beloved offering-bearer and carrier of holy rites. Tho grant us manly strength and high fame in harmony with Ashvins and Dawn! The old Sun hath awakened the new Moon, as it were from the slumber, who revolves among the stars with speed. Behold the high wisdom of God by which greatness, he who died yesterday is living today. Of great strength is the red-bird (Sun) with his own might, effulgent hero, who hath no nest to dwell. Whatever, he, the ever active knows, is nothing but truth. He, the conquuerer, gives wealth, desired by many. This is the expressed Soma, of which the Maruts, Mitra, Varuna, Aryaman and the twain Ashvins drink. They drink the purified and fresh juice placed in the three places. Indra drinks of the purified strengthening juice in the morning, like a Hotar-priest. Truly thou art great O Sun, verily Surya thou art great. O mighty thou art admired for thy majesty, O God, thou art great by the greatness! Yea, thou art great, O Sun in fame and wisdom, verily thou art great. By thy greatness, thou art the Hotar-prieest of all the worlds, foe-slayer, of ever spreading light, never conquerable. Come lord Indra, with ecstatic joys, come to our sacrifice riding thy bay steeds to our flowing Soma! Come, thou sin-slayer, doer of many noble deeds, come to our flowing juice! O Indra, Vritra-slayer, thou drinker of pressed out Soma juice, come, riding thy steeds to our effused juice! Come ye men, with your offerings to the wise and great to obtain his favours. He

is the nourisher of his subjects and grants them his grace. The sages ever sing the laud of Indra, far-spreading, great and sublime. They never transgress his laws. Indra, whose wrath is irresistible, hath been established king by the singers for victory. Glorify him for he strenghens those whom he loveth.

If I, O Indra, were the lord of riches as ample as thine, I would give them to the singer, O God who scatterst wealth, and never desert him in woe. Each day I would enrich him who sang my praise, in whatsover position he were. No kinsman is better than thou art, Indra, even father is no better guardian. Accept the prayer of one who expresses Soma, mark thou well the hymns of him who sings thy praise, O Maghvan, take to thy innermost heart these lauds! I Know and never forget thy lauds and hymns, O Indra, the conqueror, of immense strength. Thy name I ever repeat, O self-effulgent! Many are the ways of thy worhsip among men and many a time the pious sage invoke thee. O God, tarry not away from us. Praise the might of Indra, who sets his chariot in the foremost place. He slays the foes, urges us on, protects in the thick of war. The frail bow-strings of our weak enemies break at the sight of him. Thou, foeless Indra, made the rivers flow to earth, and killed Vrtra. Thou nourishes the subjects, O born foeless, to thee we draw nigh. Let the weak bow strings break upon the bows of our foes. Let our malicious foes be destroyed. Thou castest thy thunderbolt at the hostile forces who wish to strike us dead. Thy generous bounty makes us rich. Let the weak bow-strings of our weak enemies break upon their bows. One who praises thee, is bound to be rich, O rich and liberal lord, pervading all. High he would rank certainly who lauds Indra. Does not a wise king understand the lauds of an uneducated man, and the song of praise recited? He does understand and appreciate them. Give us not, O Indra, as a victim to the scornful and the violent, but succour us, mighty one, with thy powers!

Come here with thy steeds, O Indra, and listen to the eulogies of the wise. O lord, giver of comforts of life, grant us pleasures through thy offcials who carry out thy behests! The stones press the Soma here like a wolf shaking a sheep. O dweller in paradise, grant us happiness. The stones pressing the Soma juices out, call thee

here with their ringing noice. O joyful juices, most sweet, flow for Indra's delight. The Soma, expressed, wise, of manly strength waxeth Indra strong. The Soma juice, speedly as a chariot, is offered in oblation for the enjoyment of Gods. Agni I regard as our Hotar-priest, of lofty knowledge, skilled in performing Yajna, radiant, munificent, acceptor of whatever is given with reverence, son of strength, the sage endowed with wisdom, celebrate and vituous. We, O exceedingly wise Agni, praise thee, as thou art the best, and the most adorable. O Pure God, giver of wisdom, Bull with hair of flames, roaming about in all directions, mighty. Come thou for our protection. He the hero, far shining with brilliant vigour, is the slayer of the foes, like a hatchet he cuts down trees in the forest. Unsparing the sports amidst the foe, at whose contact, whatever is solid and firm dissolves like water, nor does he ever desist from their destruction like an archer who retreats not from battle.

Great fame and strength are thine, O Agni, thy flames blaze on high. O refulgent one, grant us strength and wealth, thy devotees, thou sage, passing bright with purifying, brilliant sheen thou reveals thyself. Thou guards Heaven and earth and joins them together as their son. O son of strength, omniscient, be glad with out songs of praise. In thee they have helped many kinds of foods, the priests from various lands, and of wonderous forms. O immortal, increase our wealth with thy victorious radiance. Thou, handsome to look upon, leadest us to happy Yajna. I laud the sage, who orders sacrifice, and who hath great wealth under his control. Thou bestowest wholesome, plenteous food, and wealth that brings success. They have set Agni before them as a guide, mighty, witness to all, the divine. O celestial one, most famous, with ears to hear, the people in pairs magnify thee with Vedic hymns of praise. He, whom thou makest thy friend, he overcomes all obstacles with thy help, performs great deeds and hath heroic sons. O Agni, fed with Soma, thy blue smoke being kindled is taken up. Thou art the dear friend of the vast Dawns, thou shinest in glimmerings of the night! Him, duly coming, as their germ have herbs received. This Agni hath brought waters to life. So, in the similar way, the forest trees, plants and herbs beear him within them and produce him

evermore. Foremost in the Yajna, he grows brighter with oblations for Indra. He shines in the sky far resplendent, and sends forth offspring like a queen.

The sacred psalms love him who wakes and watches, to him come the holy verses of the Vedas, to him who keeps vigil and watches this Soma says "I rest and have my abode in thy friendship". Praise unto the friends sitting in front, and unto those seated together. I use the many-footed speech of the Vedas. I use the thousand-footed speech. I sing in Gayatri, trishtup and Jagati meters, the Sama Veda that hath a thousand ways. Gavatri, Trishtup, Jagati hymns, the meters united and complete have the Gods created and made familiar friends. Agni is light, light is Agni, Indra is light, light is Surya. O Agni, come unto us again with riches, pour thou on us from all sides, thy universal stream! If I, were like thee, O Indra, the sovereign over the earth, my devotee would be rich in kine. I would be fain, O lord of strength, to strengthen and enrich the learned, were I the lord of kine and lauds. Thy bounty, God, is a cow yielding wealth, kine and cattle to thy devotees. Yea, streams of water, bring peace and happiness, help ye us to energy and make us look on great delight! Ye waters, grant us portion of the dew, the most auspicious joy that ye possess, like mothers who fondly nurse. O waters, for the removal of impurity you urge us on, and we with speed go unto ye; grant us children who make the proper use of water. May Air breathe his wholesome, delightful and medicinal balm on us to prolong our days of life. Thou art, O God, our father, our brother yea, our friend, so give us strength that we may live! O Wind-god, that store of elixir laid away within thee, give us thereof that we may live! The mighty, of diverse forms, of wings, of beauteous flames, enrobed in seasons and rays of the Sun, refulgent, nourishing the altar, his place of birth, Agni promotes the sacrifice. He, of many forms, lays his seeds in waters and appears on the earth, then establishing his greatness in mid-air, roars, the seed of the water-bearing lightning. This Agni, giver of gifts in hundreds, thousands, nourisher of the subjects of the world, assuming thousand robes that suit him, upholds the light of the Sun, and the heaven. People gaze on thee with a longing in their heart, on the

strong-winged Sun, fast moving, scattering radiance in heaven, gold-flanked, Varuna's envoy, the bird that hasteneth to the west. Established in the sky, the Sun, wearing his mutli-coloured weapons, handsome to look on, clad in far spreading form, produces happy rain-bearing clouds. Revolving with great speed in his orbit, and looking on with a vulture's eye, shining with brilliance, the Sun ever lustrous, performs deeds of world-weal, in the third region.

Swift, like a bull with sharpened horns, terriffic in attack, awe inspirer among the people, vigilant, matchless hero, Indra defeats at once a hundred armies. Ye warriors, win the war, overthrow the foe with the aids of Indra, the skilled hero, ever vigilant, subduer of the foe, victorious, irresistible, who bears arrows in his hands. He rules with warrious carrying arrows in their hands, and armed with weapons, winner of the battles, drinker of the Soma, mighty, Indra who subdues the enemy hosts, whose bow is ever erect to shoot. He shoots the enemy with his well-aimed arrow. O great Indra, attack the enemy at once riding thy war-chariot. Thou art slayer of the demons, remover of the enemy, break-up of the armies. Winning the battle and driving off the enemy, thou protect the chariots of we warriors! O foremost warrior, mighty, conscious of thine strength, victorious, commander of fine warriors, firm and fierce, Indra, thou mount thy conquering car! O coeval warriors, display your zeal and courage, quiet yourselves as heros, following Indra, who is cleaver of the mountains, strong-limbed, weilder of thunderbolt, who subdues and destroys the enemy forces! may Indra, who with winning-strength pierces the cow-stall, is pitiless hero, full of righteous wrath, irresistible, subduer of the foe, invincible commander protects our armies in the battles! Marshall thou Indra these forces. The commander should lead the divine army, the conqueror and demolisher of the foe. The hero at the head of the big bands should march on the right. The encouragers should march on the left, and soldiers under Maruts should move on the forefront. Ours is a mighty army of powerful heroes, of Indra, Varuna, Maruts and Adityas. Let the winning shout of these Gods, highminded, skilled-warriors, rend the worlds. O Maghavan, let the weapons of our warriors flourish, arouse their warring spirits, urge

the speed of the steeds, O Vritra-slayer, and let the din of conquering cars rend the sky. May Maghavan help us when our flags are collected. May our arrows be victorious. May our warrious prevail on the enemy. May Gods protect us at the time of war! Ye Maruts, envelope the enemy army approaching with mighty strength, into thick gloom that not a man of them recognises the other.

O slayer of foes, bewilder the senses of the enemy forces, seize them bodily and depart. Attacking set their hearts on the fire with woes that they may abide in utter darkness. Fare forward, O heroes and carry the day. May Indra protect you. May aweful be your mighty arms that none may wound or injure you! O arrow, thou shot from the bow, fly fast to the enemy, strike them, sharpened with our prayers, let none of the foe-men be left alive! Let ravens and strong-feathered pursue them. Yea, let the vultures feed on them. O Indra, let no sinner escape, let carrion and carnivorous birds devour them. O Vritra-slayer Maghavan, thou and Agni, ye twain, burn down the host of foemen with your flames, the army which comes marching in a warlike show! There where the arrow fall everywhere, may the commanders Brahmanaspati and Aditi protect us well through all our days. O Vritra-slayer, Indra drive away the foe, sweep away the demons, tear thou in pieces the cheeks of the enemy, quell their wrath who threaten us. O Indra, destroy the enemy, hymble the foe-men, down him who challenges us, rend him down to darnkess who wants to injure us! Strong, youthful, unassailable, pleasing, invincible are both the arms of hero Indra. Let these arms be first employed, wherewith Indra won the demons, overthrowing them in the battle.

O King, thy vital parts I cover with armour. May Soma, the lord of herbs, clothe thee in immortality. May Varuna give thee what is more than ample, and may Gods rejoice in thy victory! Blind, O my foe-men, shall ye be, even as headless serpents are. May Indra slay each best of you when Agni's flame hath struck you down. Whosoever of our relations, a godless man wants to kill us secretly, may all the Gods torment him. God is my true armour, my internal armour and protection! Thou, like a fierce wild tiger, roaming in the mountain, hast come to us from farthest place, Indra. Now thou

crush the foe, whetting thy thunderbolt sharp. Scatter them away who are at war with us! O Gods, may or ears with your grace, hear that which is auspicious. May we attain the ripe age, appointed by Gods, extolling you with our strong limbs and bodies! May Indra, the most illustrious prosper us. May Pushan, the nourisher of all, bless us! May Taskshya, the giver of comforts bless us! May Brihaspati grant us his favour. May He bestow on us his blessings!

Sandhya

Goddess. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). The daughter of Brahma and consort of Siva or other deities.

San-Dui

Tutelary god. Buddhist-Lamaist [Tibet]. One of a group of Lamaist tutelary or *yi-dam* deities chosen on an individual basis as personal guardians. Colour: blue. Attributes: bell, jewel, lotus, prayer wheel, regal trappings, staff and sword. Three-eyed and three-headed.

Sani

1. Astral god. Hindu The son of Surya and Chaya and the personification of the planet. Stands upon a lotus or rides in an iron chariot drawn by eight piebald horses. Colour: black or blue. Attributes: arrow, bow, rosary, staff and trident.

2. Astral god. Buddhist. Stands upon a tortoise. Colour: blue-black. Attribute: a staff.

Sanjana (*conscience*)

Goddess. Hindu. The daughter of Tvastar, a consort of Surya and, in some texts, the mother of Yama.

Sankari

Mother goddess. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). One of the *saptamataras.*

Sankha (*pala*)

Sanke god. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). One of a group of seven *mahanagas* or *nagadevas.* Attributes: cup and rosary. Three-eyed.

Sanmukha (*six-headed*)

God. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). A form of Skanda and the son of Pasupati and Svaha. God of the month asadha. His Saktis include Vijaya and Jaya. He holds a large variety of attributes. Also Arumukan.

Santa (*appeased*)

Mother goddess. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). A *Sakti* who is one of a group of both *saptamatara* and *astamatara* mothers. Also Camunda.

Santana (*offspring*)

Minor god. Hindu. The son of Ugra and Diksa. Also the personification of one of the five trees of paradise.

Santi (*peace of mind*)

Goddess. Hindu, The consort of Trivikrama.

Santoshi Mata

Mother goddess. Modern Hindu. She first appeared in northern Indra in 1960 and has since developed a sizeable cult following. She is invoked to assist in gaining personal advancement and prosperity.

Saptamatara

Generic title of a group of mother goddesses. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). Seven deities of evil influence, who generally inflict disease or other harm on children. Common colour: red. Attributes: cup and lotus.

Saraddevi (*goddess of autumn*)

Fertility and vegetation goddess.

Buddhist-Lamaist [Tibet]. Associated with autumn, and an attendant of the goddess Sridevi. Her sacred animal is an antelope. Attributes: cup, knife and peacock feather.

Sarama (*the nimble one*)

Attendant goddess. Hindu (Vedic, Epic and Puranic). She acts as a messenger to the god Indra and guards his herds. In later Hindu texts Sarama is reputedly the mother of all dogs and is given the epithet the 'bitch of heaven'. The *Rg Veda* accounts her as having punished the minor deity Panis for stealing cows.

Saranyu (*the fleet one*)

Primordial goddess of uncertain affinities. Hindu (Vedic). Saranyu is the daughter of the god Tvastar, and the sister of Visvarupa. Her consort is Vivasvat, by whom she is said to be the mother of Yama and Yami, the twin progenitors of the human race. Little else is known of her, but she is accounted as having an impetuous nature.

Sarasvati (*flowing water*)

Origin Hindu (Vedic. Epic, and Puranic) [Indra]. Mother goddess and goddess of wisdom. Later, patron of the arts.

Known period of worship cirea 600 BC, but undoubtedly based on much earlier prehistoric models, until present.

Synonyms Brahmi; Vagdevi (goddess of speech). Other epithets include Bharati, Centre (s) cult throughout India.

Art references sculptures generally in bronze, but also in stone. Reliefs.

Literary sources Rg Veda and other Vedic texts; *Ramayana* epic and Puranic texts.

Sarasvati, as an idenitifiable personality, may have begun as a Vedic river goddess (the actual river Sarasvati has now disappeared but she may also be linked with the Indus, etc). In the Vedic capacity her waves are said to smash mountains and her voice is the roar of the torrent. Since her source of stength is the primeval write she is inexhaustible and she is a bringer of fertility and bountiful harvests. Thus, by inference, she also provides prosperity. Her presence purifies and, in antiquity, she slew Vrtra, the demonic god of chaos. In her capacity as a Vedic goddess she is invoked on the sacrificial field with the lesser goddesses Ila, Bharati, Mahi and

Hotra.

In later Puranic literature Sarasvati (Brahmi) becomes the first consort of the creator god Brahma (see also Gayatri). Other texts offer her in contention with Laksmi as consort of Vishnu. She also became syneretized with the goddess Vac. She is said to have invented Sandkrit and is identified as goddess of wisdom and of the arts. The Vedas are her inspiration and she may be known as the 'mother of the Vedas.' A Hindu festival in her honour is celebrated in early January of late February. She is a patron goddess of students, and boods, pencils and pens are offered to her by children before they begin classes. Her image often appears on the portals of school gates.

She is generally depicted with either two or foru arms. Colour: white. She may be seated or ride upon a swan or a peacock or a lotus. Attributes include particularly the lute but also arrow, bell, book, bow, conch, club, hook, prayer wheel, roasry, water- jar and other items. She may offer a piece of sugar cane or a flower to Brahma. Infrequently three-headed.

Saraswati

Saraswati, the goddess of learning and knowledge, is the wife of Brahma, the creator of the world. She is represented as an extremely beautiful woman with milk-white complexion, sitting or standing on a water-lily and playing on a lute.

She presides over and protects arts and is credited with the invention of writing. On the fifth day of the expanding-moon fortnight during the month of Magh, the worship of this goddess is performed in front of her image or even without her image in front of her vessel in which a pen, an inkstand and a book are placed. These articles are supposed to form a proper substitute for the goddess, who is also named as Vagvadini, the deity of eloquence. Offerings are placed with flowers on these objects and prayers are chanted from scriptures.

She is also the goddess of speech, the power through which knowlege expresses itself in action. In the Vedas Saraswati is

primarily a river but in the hymns she is celebrated both as a river and a deity. This sacred river, although now dried up, is said in the Rig Veda as "she who goes pure from the mountains as far as the sea". According to Mahabharat, the river was dried up by the curse of the sage Utathya. As a river Saraswati is lauded for the fertilising and purifying powers of her waters and as the giver of fertility and wealth.

Though Rig Veda does not specifically mention her as Vach, the goddess of speech, but she is clearly bestowed this status in Mahabharat and Brahmans. Dr. Muir attempts to explain the acquisition of this character by Saraswati in these words, "When once the river Saraswati had acquired the divine character, it was but natural that this river should be regarded as the protector and patron of the rituals and ceremonies accompanied by hymns performed at her banks. For this purpose the blessings of Saraswati would have been invoked for their proper and successful performance...This idea must have been further extended to the very composition of these hymns...All this must have resulted in identifying Saraswati with Vach, the goddess of speech."

On the day consecrated to Saraswati, the musical instruments in the house are cleansed, placed on an altar and devoutly worshipped as being the abode of this goddess.

Sarvabuddhadharma-Kosavati (*with the virtues of all the buddhas*)

God of literature. Buddhist. The deification of texts. One of a group of *dharanis*, Colour: yellow. Attributes: basket of jewels and staff.

Sarvakarmavaranavisodhani (*washing away the obstruction of all deeds*)

God of literature. Buddhist. The deification of texts. One of a group of *dharanis*. Colour: green. Attribute: staff.

Saranivaranaviskambhin (remover *of stain*)

God. Buddhist (Mahayana). A *dhyaniboddhisattva* or spiritual meditation *buddha*. Colour: white. Attributes: book, jewel, moon disc, sword and staff.

Sarvapayanjaha (remover *of miseries*)

God. Buddhist (Mahayana). A *dhyaniboddhisattva* or spiritual mediation *buddha.* Colour: white. Attribute: book in two hands.

Sarvasokatamonirghatamati (des*troyer of sorrow*)

God. Buddhist. A *dhyanibodhisattva* or spiritual meditation *buddha.*

Sarvastramahajvala (*the great blaze of all weapons*)

Goddess of learning. Jain [India]. One of sixteen *vidyadevi* headed by the goddess Sarasvati.

Sasanadevata

Messenger goddess. Jain [India]. Generic name for one of agroup of twenty-four who minister to the *tirthankaras* or saints of Jainism.

Satabhisa

Minor goddess of fortune. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). A malevolent *naksatra*; daughter of Daksa and wife of Candra (Soma).

Satarupa (*with a hundred forms*)

Minor goddess. Hindu (Puranic). The daughter of Brahma with whom he committed incest and whose beauty caused him to generate four heads so that he might view her from all directions.

Sati (truth)

Origin Hindu (Epic and Puranic) [India].

Mother goddess.

Known period of worship circa 400 AD until present.

Synonyms Sakti, Parvati.

Centre (s) of cult none specific.

Art references sculptures generally in bronze, but also in stone.

Literary sources Ramayana and other texts.

Sati is the older incarnation of the benign aspect of the goddess sakti. Alternatively she is perceived as an incarnation of Laksmi. According to legend her father was Daksa and her mother Prasuti. She bore sixteen daughters, the youngest of whom was Sati. She is perceived as an ideal Hindu wife and mother who, as maiden, falls in love with the god Siva. At her choosing-of-a-husband ceremocy she is distressed that her father has invited Siva and throws her bridal into the air. whereupon Siva appears in front of her. She becomes the consort of Siva, but the marital association is generally recognized when he is in his form known as Bhava, an epithet meaning 'existence'. Eventually she dies at Daksa's feet from the self-immolating heat of her own purity and zeal. She is reincarnated as Parvati.

The mythology is the basis of the practice of self-sacrifice which came to be known as *sati* or *suttee*. She is also connected with fire-walking rituals.

Satrughna (*destroyer of foes*)

Minor god. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). The brother of Laksmana and a half-brother to the god Rama. His mother is Sumitra. He may be depicted holding a fly whisk in each hand. See also Laksmana.

Satyabhama (*with true lustre*)

Goddess. Hindu-Dravidian (Tamil). Known particularly from southern India as the second consort of Krisna, who stands on her left; also as the second consort of Vishnu. Attribute a flower.

Saubhagya-Bhuvanesvari (*buddha of good fortune*)

Goddess of good fortune. Buddhist. A gentle and benevolent deity. Colour: red. Attributes: red lotus, and water-jar with jewels.

Savari

Goddess of terrifying appearance.

Buddhist-Lamaist [Tibet]. One of a group of *gauris*. Colour: white Attributes; holding the mountain known as Meru.

Savitar (*impeller*)

Sun god. Hindu (Puranic). The original Vedic list of six descendants of the goddess Aditi or adityas, all of whom take the role of sun gods was, in later times, enlarged to twelve, including Savitar. The god of the rising and setting sun. Colour: golden. Attributes: club, prayer wheel and two lotuses.

Science of Reincarnation

Let me tell you briefly what Lord Krishna told Arjuna about reincarnation. Lord Krishna said: "At the time of death, the body dies but the soul never dies. The soul passes from one body to another after death like a body changing clothes. The soul goes on taking an endless number of bodies, until the soul exhausts all Karmas, attached to the soul. This process is known as reincarnation."

When the individual soul (Jivatman) exhausts all its Karmas and merges with God-the infinite soul (Paramatman) then we say the individual soul has attained salvation.

If a man exhibits beastly character throughout his life, he will reincarnate as a beast. A glutton may take birth as a pig or other lower forms of life. The Vedas talk about 8.5 million species of life, right from amoeba to human beings and semi-gods. A man can take anyone of these life-forms. Sometimes the soul will also remain in a standstill state for long periods of time without taking any body at all. However, please understand that the soul can get rid of its Karma only if it takes a body. So for attaining salvation, the soul is bound to reincarnate.

Lord Krishna has said that whatever form one thinks of during the time of death, one will attain that form. But at the same time. you know very well that a man who has beastly ideas throughout his life is unlikely to think of God during the time of death. Only God-fearing people can think of God during the time of death; others will think of a multitude of things but not about God.

As I told you before, when a man dies his soul takes with it the sum-total of good and bad Karmas. If the sum-total of his actions is

bad, he will go for a worse life-form. So it is the sum-total of Karma that decides the travel route of the soul. One or two bad actions alone do not determine the soul's new destination.

As per the law of Karma, the parents are destined to have a sick child to worry about and the child is destined to be born with sickness. But understands, both parents and the child can make life better by new good positive actions.

The most important part of any action is the motive behind it. If the motive is bad, then the best action is piosonous. For example, let us say that you are helping a poor innocent young girl to come up in her life. But if you are doing it with the intention of exploiting her at some future time, then your action is vicious and bad. But if your intentions are strictly humanitarian, then your action is a virtuous action indeed. The surgeon and the soldier do diagonally opposite actions. One saves life and other takes it away, but the motives of both actions are very good. So both actions are good.

As per Hinduism such an action will condemn the soul for thousands of years, and be forced to start life all over again from the lowest level of the evolutionary ladder. The soul will have to wait countless years to finally take a human body again. Sometimes, the soul will remain in a standstill condition, becoming a ghost without taking a body, as per the *Maha Bhagavatam.*

It not only agrees, but goes one step further by saying that the soul of a man even go back on the ladder of evolution and take the body of an Amoeba.

It may be a mere coincidence, but at the same time, it is very interesting to note that the 10 Avatars of Lord Vishnu are curiously complying with Darwin's theory of evolution. First Lord Vishnu came as Matsya (fish — living in water), then came as Kurma (tortoise — living in water as well as on land), then came as Varaha (boar — living on land only, an animal) then came as *Narasimha* (man-lion, a combination of man and beast) then came as Vamana (child or dwarf), then came as Parasurama (ferocious fighter born to kill the Kshatriyas), then came as Rama (a king with all the problems of an crdinary human being), then came as

Krishna (the superhuman, in a way the superman beyond any comparison with anyone else), then came Buddha (the silent one, a realised master) and finally still to come as Kalki (the destroyer to annihilate creation, so that the process of recreation can be started all over again). As I said before, this could be a strange coincidence or mythology may have been written based on in-depth knowledge of seers in human reproduction and development of a human being within the womb, where the foetus undergoes timely transformation in tune with Darwin's theory of evolution.

I could answer you that you were an amoeba first and then from that life you slowly evolved by thousands of reincarnations to a human being, but your next question will then be : How did I take birth as an amoeba? I do not want to speculate. No scriptures talk about it. The Bhagavad Gita said: Creation came out of food, food came out of rains, rains came out of Yajna, Yajna came out of Karmas, Karmas came out of Nature, Nature came out of the Infinite." This answer shows the instrumentality of creation. It shows our birth is purely instrumental and our desire for salvation is also purely instrumental. As long as you experience pleasure or pain, you are forced to correct the path you are travelling along and go above those experiences, you are automatically a realised soul. I am sure that if you contemplate on the above question, you will one day find the answer, but once you know the answer, you will be unable to express it in words for anyone else. Remember prince Siddhartha renounced the world to find answers to old age and disease and finally became the Buddha, the silent one. When his devotees questioned him for answers to old age and disease, he told them to follow the eightfold path and that would lead them to Trugh and provide all answers.

Please do not think that even in your wildest dreams: God cannot curse anyone. He is the symbol of love and compassion. As I told you before, God has given us *Free Will* and our fate is decided by our own actions and our own thoughts. Each moment of our life we are doing things which decide our fate. Our past actions in our last life determine the trajectory of travel of the soul in the present.

So as per the Hindu Law of Karma, people who had done bad

Karmas in their past life take birth in bitter conditions in this life. Unluckily, many souls whose past lives' Karmas were very bad are born together in the deserts of Ethiopia, but they are not destined to suffer for ever. They should on their part help themselves to come out of this terrible condition. We on our part should help them to do so. It is our duty to do everything in our power to wipe out starvation and misery from Ethiopia. By serving them we are actually bettering our own fate for even the best among us may have abundantce of past bad Karmas. So remember the words of Christ: "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (St. Mathew 7-1). The only thing we can do for the poor and the sick is to help them to come out of all miseries, and by doing so, we make our present and future lives better. The Hindu Law of Karma explains all the problems we see in our lives.

I have to admit to you in all honesty that we do not have any corrobrative scientific evidence to prove the science or theory of reincarnation. Many books have any corroporative scientific evidence to prove the science or theory of reincarnation. Many books have been written on this subject and some of them narrate stories told by people under hypnotic suggestions.

Unluckily, most of these books are written by zealots who were carried away with the idea of reincarnation. Therefore, I cannot point out to you concrete evidence, but at the same time, I want to say that there is a mystery regarding death and reincarnation and unless and until someone proves to the world that reincarnation science is false this age-old scientific idea is here to stay. Please tell me, are there better theories to explain the problems in the world than the law of karma and the science of *reincarnation*? There are even statements in the Bible, pointing out the science of reincarnation. Christ said, "But I say unto you, that Elias has come already, and they knew him not." (Mathew 17-12); "Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them John the Baptist." (Mathew 17-13). Through those lines Christ is declaring to the world that the beheaded John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elias. As a proof of existence of the soul, Christ said, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul."

Seyon (*the red one*)

Creator god. Dravidian (Tamil) [southern India and Sri Lanka]. An early deity associated particularly with hilly regions in parts of southern India and thought to live in trees. Also Muruga.

Shadanana-Subrahmanya

Form of the god Karttikeya. Hindu (Puranic). The form possesses six heads and twelve arms. According to legend, the six heads arose because the fire god Agni had an adulterous relationship with the six consorts of the risis (astral gods) who all needed to suckle the offspring. Like Karttikeya, he is usually depicted riding on a peacock.

Shanee

Shanee or Saturn, is a god of whom the superstitious and orthodox Hindus are very much afraid. In all big cities his image made of iron painted in black with four arms and a protruding red- coloured tongue, can be seen placed in many street corners. People can be seen dropping coins before it, pouring oil over it and paying homage to it. It is done to appease this god so that he may not harm the worshipper.

According to Jyotish Tatva "if a person be born under the planet Shancee, he will be slandered, his riches dissipated, his peace destroyed and his family harmed". People in general are very much afraid of this god's displeasure, which if aroused shall lead to endless sufferings.

It is a common belief that when Shanee is in the ninth stellar mansion, the most dreadful events befall mankind. When Lord Ram broke the bow of Shiv in the Court of King Janak prior to his marriage with Sita, the earth sank in many places. The waters of the seven seas was in turmoil. Parsuram, very startled at the noise, immediately exclaimed, "Ah! Someone has laid hold of the hood of Shesh Nag, the king of snakes, or fallen under the ninth of Shanee". When Ram found that his wife Sita had been stolen by somebody, he in anger exclaimed that "the person who did that must have been born when Shanee was in the ninth mansion".

The vehicle of this god is shown as a crow, a specially unlucky bird. Shanee was the son of Surya and Chhaya while another account says that he was born of Bal Ram and Revati. He is also named as Krur-Drashti (the evil eyed one).

To ward off the evil influence of this god on a person, special prayers are prescribed and rituals suggested.

It is said that the sure antidote of Saturn or Shanee's evil effect is the worship of Lord Hanuman. Scriptures say that when Saturn warned Lord Hanuman about his onset of the Seven and Half years (Saade Saati), the Monkey Lord accepted the challenge and allowed Saturn to have his play. When the planet dwelled on Lord Hanuman's head, the Monkey Lord 'headed' heavy rocks so viciously that the planet was almost crushed. Similar agony he faced when he tried to dwell on the Monkey Lord's body and legs. Then the planet had to bow before the Lord, saying that whosoever worshipped Lord Hanuman shall be beyond the evil effect of the planet.

gShen Rab

Supreme god. Bon (pre-Lamaist) [Tibet]. In the ancient religion he is the remote and barely defined creator deity. Atrributes include a lotus and swastika.

Shesh Nag

Shesh Nag (the serpent god) comprises an important part of Hindu mythology. As the reclining couch and the roofing canopy of the god Vishnu, it has been a god venerated by all and worshipped by many for centuries.

It is considered to be the king of the serpent race and the ruler of the infernal regions called *Patal.* God Vishnu sleeps over the bed of its coils during intervals of creation. Shesh Nag is also represented as one supporting the world on its hood.

The Nags have three Kings, Vaasuki, Takshak and Shesh. Shesh is said to represent the 'remainder' when the universe is destroyed and the power of creation (Lord Vishnu) rests on its coils. The Nags are dwelling in an underworld, called Nag Loke, which is an

immense domain crowded with palaces, houses, towers and pleasure gardens. According to Varah Puran, three of the lower worlds, Patal, Atal and Sutal belong to the Nags. Their favourite places of visitations are the banks of river, Ikshumati, the Naimish forest on the shores of the Gomati, the northern banks of the Ganga and the Nishad land. They also dwell under the sea.

These nags are not always the enemy of man and they even intermarry with them. Arjun of Mahabharat married a Nag girl named Uloopi. Shesh Nag is the serpent with a thousand heads and is also called 'Anant', the timeless, because it does not die with destruction of the universe.

All serpents are of divine extraction, because they are the children of Kadru, who herself is the descendant of Kashyap. The main city of Nags is Bhogvati (the city of pleasures), where Shesh appears like the white mountain adorned with gems. The later Purans identify Shesh even with Krishna as Vishnu. Shesh is said to be the soul of Krishna's brother Balram. Thus Shesh emerged from the body of dying Balram and entered the earth, where he was warmly welcomed by all other serpents.

Shiv

Shiv meaning 'the Good' God is the third member of the triad. He is also named as Mahesh or Mahadev (the Greatest God). He is much more many-sided and multi-colourful than many of the other gods including Vishnu.

Shiv is represented in various ways but the distinctive characteristics of this god are (1) his seat, which is invariably either the skin of a tiger or a panther (2) a number of cobras all around his neck and shoulders, (3) his long matted hair tied into a mop atop his head, (4) the crescent that he wears on the mop of his hair, (5) the sacred river Ganga falling upon his head and flowing by his side, (6) the trident (trishula), the symbol of his power, (7) the sacred bull, and (8) the mendicant's bowl.

Besides these symbols another very important physical characteristic of Shiva is his vertical third eye. In the Mahabharata, the Great Hindu epic, the legend of how Shiva got the third eye is

narrated this way. One day his beautiful consort Parvati, daughter of the King of Mountains, stealthily went behind Shiv and playfully placed her hands over his eyes. Suddenly darkness engulfed the whole world and all beings trembled in great fear as the lord of the universe had closed his eyes. Suddenly a massive tongue of flame leapt from the forehead of Shiv; a third eye had appeared there and this gave light to the world.

In "Sri Shiv Tattva" this eye is described as 'the frontal eye, the eye of fire, it is the eye of higher perception. It looks mainly inward but whenever directed outward, it burns all that appears before it. It is from a glance of the third eye that Kam, the lord of lust, was burnt to ashes and that the gods and all created beings are destroyed at each of the periodical destructions of the universe.' Having three eyes, Shiva is also called Tri-netra, Tri-ambaka, Tri-aksha or Tri-nayana.

About the different symbols surrounding Lord Shiv, the scriptures gives various explanations.

(a) *The tiger skin*: The tiger is the vehicle of Shakti, the goddess of all power and force. Shiv is beyond and above any kind of force. He is its master and carries the skin of the tiger as the victor of every force. An interesting legend in Purans narrates that once Shiv wandered in the forests in the form of a bare-bodied mendicant and the wives of the sages were enchanted by his figure. The jealous sages in anger tried to over-power him by digging a pit. When Shiv passed by that pit, a tiger was made to rush out of it. Shiv slew that tiger and taking its skin wore it as a garment.

(b) *Cobras around neck:* Shiv is beyond the power of death though he is surrounded and encircled by death. This aspect is also emphasised by his name Neelkanth, the god who alone can drink the deadly poison to free the world from its effects. Now these cobras around his neck also represent the basic dormant energy, which in cobra-like manner is coiled at the base of the spinal cord. It is called kundalini, the serpent power.

(c) *Matted hair:* The flowing Jata of Shiv's matted hair represents him as the lord of wind, Vayu, who is the subtle form of the breath

all round.

(d) *Crescent on hair-mop*: He bears on his head as a diadem the crescent of the fifth day moon. Placed near the fiery third eye this shows the power of Soma, the sacrificial offering, which is the representative of Moon. It means that Shiv possesses the power of procreation co-existent with that of destruction.

(e) *Sacred Ganga*: The holiest of the holy rivers, namely Ganga, flowing from the crown of Shiv's head represents the causal waters, from which the earth arises. It also represents the essential instrument of ritual purification. Holding the Ganges on his head, Shiv allowed the outlet to the great holy river so as to traverse the earth and bring purifying water to the human beings.

(f) *The Trident*: Trishul of Shiva is the symbol of the three functions of the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer. This also represents the instrument of punishment to the evil doer on all the three planes, viz., spiritual, subtle and physical.

In popular representations Shiv stands majestically in the centre of the universe,. adorned with all his symbols of crescent, cobras, prayer beads, trident and matted hair. Very often a female figure-head adorns his head; she is goddess Ganga who was brought from heavens by Bhagirath and as earth could not bear Ganga's impact, she was taken by Shiv on his own head.

At other times Shiv is shown as riding on his bull, called Nandi, covered with ashes all over his body, his eyes inflamed with intoxicating herbs and with a drum and a horn in his two hands. Here the ashes on the body symbolise him as a Yogi, who has burnt all his evil desires and rubbed himself with the ashes of the ritual fire.

Shiv's bull, Nandi (the joyful) is white as snow with a huge body and soft brown eyes. Its hump resembles the top of a snow-covered mountain. Bull represents lust or the sexual impulse and Shiv is the master of lust fully controlling it by riding on its back.

Another well-known name of Shiv is Rudra. In the Vedas Rudra is called by many names and has many attributes. He is the roaring

god, the terrible god, the terrible god, the god of storms, the god of tempest. On the one hand if angry he can bring disaster to man and his wealth of cattle but if pleased he can be king and beneficient. In Yajurveda Rudra is also called. 'Mahadeva', a name specifically applied today only to Shiv. According to Vishnu Puran this god Rudra is said to have sprung from the forehead of Brahma and to have separated himself into male and female. This legend is the forerunner of Shiv's another manifestation, called Ardh Narishwar, where he is half-male and half-female, combining energies of both the sexes. There Rudra is also given seven other names by Brahma: Bhava, Sarva, Ishan, Pashupati, Bhima, Ugra and Mahadev. These names are all being given to Shiv. Finally Rudra of the Vedas ceased to have any separate identity and became completely merged into Shiv.

Shiv represents the complete cyclic process of generation, destruction and regeneration. The all-embracing nature of this god is reflected in 1008 names given to him in scriptures and in the mind of numerous Hindus he is recognised as being essentially no different from the Vedic notion of the multiple forms of a single divine power.

Shiv is also called by the well-known name of Nataraj, the lord of the cosmic dance. Numerous images of Shiv in his dancing pose are available throughout India and this image of Shiv is also the most popular one amongst the foreigners. The small drum of Lord Shiv is the symbol of rhythm and sound. In fact rhythm is there in the whole movement of the universe and sound is the medium, musical and divine, that comes from the word of Supreme Deity, and carries revelations and the truth. Sound with atmospheric either also represents the primeval outburst of creation.

Shiv's name Shankar means the Giver of Joy, and other name Shambhu means the Abode of Joy. As Maheshwar he is the Divine Lord, the source of knowledge. In Maheshwar are co-ordinated the three energies from which knowledge flows, the power of understanding (Jnana), the will (Iccha) and action (Kriya). Shiv is Mahakal, which means not only the Lord of Death but much more correctly the Lord of Time. Before anything could come to exist,

time has to be present. In fact time is the first condition for the existence of the world. It is prior to space.

The image of Ardh-Narishwar, half-male and half-female, represents Lord Shiv as the union of substance and energy, the life principle and shakti.

Shiv's another well-known name is Yogi Raj, i.e., the Lord of Yoga. He is himself represented as the perfect or the greatest ascetic. He is the last word in austerity, penance and meditation. This method of Yoga is different from rituals and therefore in some earlier Hindu scriptures, Shiv is accused of teaching the secrets of higher truths to those who are lowborn or who are not properly qualified for ritual practices. To Lord Shiv is attributed revealing to mankind the method and technique of Yoga, which is these days so very popular in the West.

This god in many images is shown to have five faces-looking towards East, West, North and South while the fifth one is shown looking upward. The five aspects represented by these five faces are: (1) The face looking upward is called Ishana (the Ruler), and is copper-coloured. He is the embodiment of all forms of learning and represents the enjoyer of nature (Kshetragjan). (2) The eastern face of Shiv is called Tat-Purusha (the Supreme Man) and is yellow-coloured. It represents all nature connected with earth, the sense of smell and the anus as the organ of action. (3) The western face of Shiv is red and is called Vam Deva (the Left-hand Deity), it represents Ego (*Ahamkara*) and corresponds to the element fire. It is connected with the sense of sight. (4) The southern face of Shiv is blue or sometimes blue-black, it is called Aghora Bhairav (the Non-fearful or the Frightful), it represents Intellect (Buddhi) and Eternal Laws (Dharma). It is connected with the sense of hearing and the organ of speech. (5) The northern face of Shiv is called Sadyojat (the suddenly born) and is white in colour. It represents the mind and corresponds to sacrificial elixir (Soma).

Amongst the above five faces the southern face of Shiv, called Aghora-Bhairav needs a brief introduction on its own. As indicated above, Bhairay means 'Frightful', 'Terrible'. Lord Shiv, after the death of his first wife named 'Sati' could not be consoled. He

wandered over the earth aimlessly carrying the corpse of his consort on his shoulders. To bring Shiv to his normal state and to cure him of this obsession Vishnu used his Sudarshan Chakra and cut up Sati's body scattering her limbs at various spots. The places where the limbs fell became sacred spots and are known as Shaktipiths. Each of these spots it guarded by Shiv in the form of a Bhairav. Bhairav is seen either in the company of a dog or riding a dog. Bhairav is invoked in rites designed to destroy enemies.

Another most popular image of Shiv has no human form but is represented by Ling (Phallus Figure). It is made of black or white stone, depicted sometime as 'rounded both at top and bottom to show that it does not stand' or 'arise from' anywhere in our space or time, and in some cases an egg-shaped stone tapering at top recalling either the 'Cosmic Egg', from which the world emerge or the 'Bright Flame of Light', hence it is called Jyotir Ling too. Thus whether depicted as the generative symbol or the fountain-source of light, this Ling represents the Lord of the Universe.

It may also be noted that sex symbolism is for long associated with farming and the implements connected with it. This fertility aspect of the Ling belongs to the period of Epics and Purans. As the symbol of transcendental energy and power Ling is the central conception of Shiv philosophy. Shiv is represented in temples in beautifully sculptured forms as well as the symbolic Ling form. Amongst the Lingayat sect followers, the initiation ceremony corresponding to the sacred thread ceremony of most of the Hindus is performed by replacing Yajnopavita (the sacred thread) with necklace of small *lings*. In south India a formalised miniatureling, attached to a necklace and concealed under the clothing, is also worn by male devotees of Shiv.

In fact the phallus aspect has been overdone by western scholars though *Ling's* first meaning is that of a 'sign', 'mark' or 'symbol'. Shiv-Puran, the source book of Shiv's divintiy, itself defines ling as "The distinctive sign through which it is possible to recognise the nature of the object." Thus Ling, the phallus, giver of life is the important shape under which the nature of the shapeless can be represented. Again Shiv-Puran in another hymn says. "It is not the

Ling itself which is worshipped but the owner of the Ling, the Progenitor, the Supreme Creator (Purushottam), the Ling leads to Shiv, whose symbol it is''. The Shiv-Ling is represented erect and is divided into three parts. The lowest part is below the pedestal, and is called brahma part. The middle or the second part is on the pedestal and is womb-shaped: it is called the Vishnu part. The third part is cylindrical and rises above the pedestal; this is the Rudra-Shiv part.

Shiv-Ratri, i.e., Shiv's Night is the famous festival in honour of Lord Shiv. It is held on the fourteenth night of the dark half moon in the month of Magh (January-February). Throughout the night Shiv's image is covered by showers of green leaves. This custom is based on a legend that narrates how a hunter after his game in a thick forest lost the way and decided to spend the night under a tree. He could not sleep properly due to cold and feeling uneasy kept on changing postures. With his movements the leaves kept on falling below, where a Shiv-Ling stood at the foot of the tree. Lord was so pleased with him that he bestowed upon him good fortunes. Hence the custom of holding this night- festival, named Shiva-Ratri.

Siddhi (*accomplishment, success*)

Minor goodess of good fortune. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). A deity who grants favours. Sometimes associated with the elephant god Ganesha or Maha-Ganapati, on whose knee she may sit. In earlier times she may site. In earlier times she was descrifbed as a consort of Bhaga.

Sikhandin (*with a tuft of hair*)

Minor deity. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). One of a group of emancipated *vidyesvaras* (lords of knowledge) considered to be aspects of Siva. Attributes: knife and sword.

Sikhin

Physician god. Buddhist-Lamaist [Tibet].

Accounted amongst one of a series of medicine *buddhas* or *sMan-bla.* Typically depicted with stretched ear-bobes. Colour:

yellowish red.

Note: the term also defines the symbolic use of fire.

Sikhism

The Sikhs are members of one of India's youngest religions. Their name is derived from the Sankrit stsya and the Pali sikkha, which both mean "disciple."Founded in northern India in the fifteenth century A.D. by Guru Nanak, Sikhism has today about 9 million adherents, of which about 85 per cent live in the Indian state of Punjab. There also are large groups in Delhi, the state of Haryana, and other parts of India. In addition, Sikh communities can be found in Malaysis, Singapore, East Africa, England, Canada, and the United States.

All Sikhs regard themselves as disciples of the ten gurus, a line of religious teachers that began with Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and ended with Guru Gobind Singh, who died in 1708. The Sikh holy book is the *Adi Granth* (Original Book), which is kept in the main Sikh shrine, the Golden Temple of Amritsar.

Rejecting or downplaying external aspects of religious expression, Sikhs aim to achieve the experience of God in their souls. Their primary emphasis is not on prophecy or ritual, but on the consciousness of God in themselves. Sikhs do not seek an escape from the world, but rather spiritual insight during carthly life.

Basically Sikhim is an offshoot of Hinduism although it also owes important insights to Islam, particularly to the Sufis (Muslim mystics). For the Sikhs, God is the one and the true, a strictly monotheistic concept derived from the awe Muslims feel for Allah. The religion of the Sikhs is a new way of life with its own distinctive character. Originally advocating tolerance and love between Hindus and Muslims, the Sikhs, after being persecuted, were forced to become militant. Since the time of Guru Gobind Singh, they have identified God with power. Disciples of the gurus are urged to be courageous and to overcome or avoid lust, anger, greed, and egotism. During the British domination of India this ethos, It is the superb physical condition of many young Sikhs, attracted the favorable attention of British officials. As a result,

Sikhs became highly respected soldiers and policemen in Burma. Hong Kong and other parts of the British Empire. These same qualities of manly resoution and loyalty continue today to serve the Sikhs well in the republic of India.

The Sant Background and the Poet Kabir

Sikhism began in the Punjab region of northwestern Indra. In Nanak's time the Punjab was much larger than the present Indian state of the same name and included the foothills of the Himalayan and Afghan mountains as well as live rivers—the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas—which seek an escape from the world, but rather spiritual insight during earthly life.

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The men or woman slain by this word find true life in a mystical union with God the ineffable.

Nanak's Career

Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was born to a warnor caste family in Taluandi, a village on the Rai River about thiry miles from Lahore. His father was a revenue collector for the village's Muslim overseer, and Nanak received a Hindu upbringing. New details are known about Nanak's life, and Sikh authorities consider his writings in the Adi Granth the only authentic source of information about him. Howerver, popular piety in the *Janam- Sakhis* Birth Evidences), a noncanonical Sikh writing, has suppled many legends about his life. According to one account, Nanak at the age of seven months could already assume the Hindu thread ceremony when he was ten. Later he decided not to study accounting, the profession his father had intended for him. Instead, he took instruction in Hindu lore from a village pandit (Hindu teacher) and also attended a Muslim school, where he acquired a knowledge of Islamic teaching and some instruction in Arabic and Persian.

Much of northern India in Nanak's youth was under the Delhi sultanate, a Muslim kingdom established in the late twelfth century. There, two social systems lived side by side. The Hindus had a tolerant religion but a closed social system based on caste. The Muslims had a more open social system but a dogmatic religion. Nanak adjusted well to life under the Muslim overlords. When his older sister Nanaki married the steward of Daulat Khan, an important Muslim official in a nearby town, Nanak also found service there as an accountant in Daulat Khan's household.The future guru was, according to legend, sixteen years old at the time.

Three years later he married and eventually became the father of two sons. During this time he befriended Mardana, a Muslim servant and musician in Daulat Khan's home. Soon Nanak gathered about him a group of followers who bathed together in a river before dawn every day and met in his home in the evening to sing religious songs he had composed. Mardana accompanied the group on the rebec, a stringed instrument.

When Nanak was thirty years old, he received a divine call: One day he failed to return from his morning bath in the river. His friends, finding his clothes on the bank of the river, dragged the waters in a vain attempt to find his body. Three days later Nanak reappeared. At first he gave no explanation for his absence but made only the following cryptic statement: "There is neither Hindu nor Mussulman [Muslim] so whose path should I choose? I shall flow into the Indus River. Now a rich farming area, it was then well forested.

The religious and cultural background of Nanak's teaching can be traced to the Sant tradition. The Sants were a devotional group within Hinduism's bhakti movement whose followers worshiped the god Vishnu. The Sant tradition began in the Tamil country of southern India and was brought to the north by Ramaniya (around A.D. 1450). The Sants affirmed that God (whom they identified with Visnu) was the only reality in life; everythings else was just *maya* (illusion). under the direction of a guru, they sought to approach God by means of meditating, repeating God's name, and singing hymns. They rejected the caste system and the religious monopoly of the brahmans.

Most Sants came from the lower castes of Hinduism. They did not use Sanskrit, the sacred language of the brahmans, but addressed God in a dialect spoken in the Delhi area. They developed neither scriptures nor rites. Their emphasis was on unity as opposed to duality, and they taught that human beings would continue to encounter suffering on the path toward salvation, that is unity with God. Unlike they Vedanta tradition of Hinduism, the Sants did not identify God with the world; rather, to them he was manifest in creation, especially through his immanence (the quality of indwelling) in the human soul.

The Sant viewpoint was influenced by the teaching of the Naths, another Hindu group whose members were not in accord with the brahmans. The Nath founder was a semi-legendary figure named Gorakhnath, who is reported to have lived in the Punjab in the twelfth century. The Naths believed it was possible to obtain release from the cycle of karma and rebirth through asceticism and

yoga. Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was from a Nath family.

Kabir (1440-1518), whose name means in Arabic "the Great," was an important Sant leader. According to legend, he grew up in the area of Banaras and belonged to the jullaha caste of weavers. His family were Naths who had converted to Islam. Thus Kabir, who became a poet and a mystic, owed much of his thought and language to both his Nath background and the Sufi mystics.

As a Sant teacher, Kabir rejected the authority of the Hindu Vedas and Upanishads and that of the Quran. He was convinced that all human beings were brothers and sisters before the mystery of the divine and that religion without love was empty and powerless. The path to salvation required the invocation of God's name: "Utter the name of God: He extinguishes birth and death...I utter his Name, and whatever I see reminds me of Him; whatever I do becomes his worship."

Kabir accepted the Hindu belief in karma and rebirth the transmigration of souls; yet he proclaimed that release was possible through the follow God's path. God is neither Hindu nor Mus-sulman and the path which I follow is God" Later Nanak told them that in his vision he had been carried up to God's presence. After receiving a cup of nectar, God gave him the following message:

I am with thee. I have given thee happiness, and I shall make happy all who take thy name Go thou and repeat my Name; cause others to repeat it. Abide unspoiled by the world. Practice charity, perform ablutions, worship and meditate. My name is God, the primal Brahma. Thou are the Holy Guru.

Inspired by his vision, Nanak expressed his faith in the following statement that begins the *japji*, a part of the Adi Granth prayed silently each day by all Sikhs:

There is but one God whose name is True the Creator, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn, self-existent, great and bountiful. The True One was in the beginning, the True One was in the primal age, The True One is, was, O Nanak, and the True One also shall be.

At this point Nanak bacame a *guru.* (The Sikhs explain this term as meaning one who drives away darkness [gu] and preaches enlightenment [ru].) Often accompanied by Mardana, Nanak traveled around spreading his religious message and singing hymns. According to legend, he made four journeys, visiting Assam in the east, Sri Lanka in the south, Ladakh and Tibet in the north, and Mecca, Medina, and Baghdad in the west. On one occasion he decided to eat at the home of a poor Hindu carpenter rather than accept the hospitality of a rich Muslim official. When asked the reason for this decision, Nanak squeezed the carpenter's coarse bread in his right hand, and from it came drops of milk. Next he squeezed the rich man's bread in his left hand, and from it came drops of blood. The answer was clear; the poverty of an honest man had merit, but the wealth of a greedy oppressor of the poor was to be despised.

Such accounts in the *Janam-Sakhis* reflect the pious beliefs of Sikhs who lived much later than the founder. Modern scholars do accept that Nanak was a wandering missionary for a while, but most of them doubt that he ever left India. About this time, life in northern India became very unsettled after radical political changes plunged it into a prolonged period of violence and bloodshed. In 1504 Babur (1483-1530), a Muslim conqueror from Central Asia, occupied Afghanistan and shortly thereafter launched a series of military campaigns into India. Hindu and Muslim kingdoms were swept aside, and by 1525 Babur had deposed the sultan of Delhi and laid the foundations of the Mughul Empire.

Nanak, deeply shocked by the cruelty of the in vading armies, decided about 1521 to look for a place of refuge and stability. During his travels he is said to have dressed either as a Sufi or a Hindu sannyasi, which meant that up to that time he had passed through at least three of the stages of a Hindu's life: student, householder, and forest dweller When he decided to settle down again with his family, Nanak voluntrily returned to the householder stage. In the last years of his life he dressed and conducted himself like any member of the community except in one respect: As a guru, he was entitled to use a special seat, a *gadi,* while teaching his disciples.

The guru and his family established a religious center at Kartarpur, a village built on land donated by a wealthy member of the new faith, and all of whose re.idents were converts. Nanak continued to make missionary trips to places nearby, and there are records of the debates he conduucted with the yogis of other villages. His teaching was in the Sant tradition. Refjecting the magic spells and divine images of popular Hinduism, he urged his follower to meditate, to worship God, and to sing hymns.

At the end of his life Nanak appointed Lehan or Lahina, a member of the warrior caste, as his sucessor. He did not regard his own sons as suited to guide the community. Calling Lehna to him at a public gathering, the old guru placed before his successor a coconut, the symbol of the umiver and five coins representing air, earth, fire, water and ether. He then handed over a book of hymns which represented the message of the new faith and a woolen string, the symbol of renunciatier worn by Sufis around their hats. Finally Nanas gave Lehna a new name. He was henceforth to be known as Angad, a pun on *ang* (limb): Lehna would become a "limb" or a "part" of Nanak.

The Founder's Teaching

Although Sikhism has evolved over the centuries, its teaching has remained essentially that of its founder. The Adi Granth states:

Nanak, without the indwelling Name of God one endures suffering throughout the four ages [of the universe]. What a terrible separation it is to be separated from God and what a blissful union to be united with Him.

As conceived by Nanak, the ultimate purpose of all religion was union with God through his indwelling in the human soul. By receiving divine grace in this way, human beings were freed from the cycle of birth and rebirth and then passed beyond death into a realm of infinite and eternal bliss.

Nanak reinterpreted the Sant tradition and gave it conherence and effective expression. Like Kabir, Nanak believed the climactic union with whereas kabir's mystical thought was conveyed through pithy sayings, Nanak's teaching offered a clear path to salvation

which Sikhs continue to follow today. He compared the way God's salvation was revealed to the experience of persons blinded by their own pervesity. Awakened from this condition of stubornness, they could begin to understand the word of God in the surrounding world. They could hear the voice of God speaking mystically in their souls. By meditating on the divine name, human beings were cleansed of impurities and enabled to ascend higher and higher until they achieved union with the eternal one.

The similarities between the Sikh and Sufi perspectives are obvious. Both find God's revelation in creation, and both speak of the Deity in terms of light and emphasize his unity. Like the Sufis, Nanak used the figure of a veil that concealed the truth from human perception. Both Sikhs and Sufis reject worldly wealth and hold that suffering in the world arises as a result of humanity's separation from God. And both describe the ascent of human beings to God as an experience leading through a number of intermediate stages that culminates in the ultimate union.

Despite all these shared ideas, nowever, Nanak rejected Sufism along with other forms of Islam. In a direct contradiction of Islamic teaching, he accepted the notions of karma and the transmigration of the soul. In short, there is little support for the argument that Nanak sought to reconcile Ḥindu and Muslim beliefs: He viewed both faiths as wrong in principle. The Adi Granth states categorically, "Neither the Veda nor the Kateb [Qur'an] knows the mystery." Quite obviously, the founder of Sikhism wished to move toward a new spiritual insight for all humanity.

The Concept of God

Beside God there is no other—this is the essence of Nanak's approach to the supreme Being. Sikhism is monotheistic, but not in the same way as Jadaism. Sikhism does not identify God and the world, as Hindu monism did in its concep of the Brahman. Nanak taught that God's essence could be known only through a personal experience of mystical union, not through the working out of history. God is beyond all human categories, yet is in them as well. Nanak used the names of other deities as conventional figures to speak of God. "God is Hari, Ram, and Gopal, and He is also Allah,

Khuda, and Sahib'' Despite his many manifestations, God alone exists; there is no other like him. In his primal aspect he is devoid of all atributes, absolute and unconditioned.

For countless ages there was undivided darkness, no heaven, no earth, just *hukam*, the infinite order of God. God endowed himself with attributes that have brought him within the range of human understanding. He is eternal, omniscient, and omnipotent. Yet Nanak did not teach that God had become incarnate, in the same way as Christians speak of Jesus as God-man. Such a concept, in the Sikh perspective, would involve God with death, the supreme enemy, as well as with an unstable world.

The Problem of Evil

The Adi Granth underscores the sinfulness of unsanctified humanity. Human beings in this condition are compared to headless persons, wanderers, and vagrants. Their dominant impulse is said to be *haumai*, which is best translated as "self-centeredness." Persons of haumai are ruled by evil passions. Self-willed and impure, they fail to discern the divine order. Inaak's view the nature of human beings depended on the affiliations they made. Their nature could be transformed as their focus was lifted from the world to the divine name.

Nanak used the word maya to describe the world. In Sikhism, however, this term does in Vedanta Hinduism. In Nanak's view the world was unreal only to the extent that it was mistaken for something it was not. For Sikhs, "delusion" would be a better definition. To them, creation can be a revelation of God or a snare. Maya, a mistaken interpretation of nature and the purpose of the world, besically means untruth and separation from God. The world is described as *anjan*, that is, a black salve for the eyes, which in northern India is a traditional wymbol of darkness and untruth. Nanak saw the world as real but perishable, whose possessions could not accompany human beings beyond death.

Salvation

Nanak believed that God himself was responsible for the union between God and humanity that was the climax of the process of

salvation. The participation of human beings in this process was dependent on God's prior activity and divine grace. Truth and contentment did not result from what human beings did or said, but from obedience to God.

Nanak's notion of the guru as the communicator of divine truth also was adopted by his successors. He saw the guru as a ladder human beings climbed to reach God or a ship that carred human beings to the realm of God. Identified with the only true reality, God the guru was vested with the authority to speak God's word.

Nanak did not define the word of God; he viewed it as a function of the deity, rather than an ineffable experience. Only by hearing it could human beings achieve salvation. Sacrifice, charitable gifts for the purpose of acquiring merit, austerities, and religious rites led only to the continuation of human suffering and bondage.

The Role of the Gurus

From the death of Guru Nanak in 1539 until the death of Guru Gobind Singh in 1708, the teaching of the founder was continued and fostered by his nine successors. During this period of 269 years Sikhims developed from a small community into an important religious and political organization, and the gurus were recognized as leaders of the Sikh community.

Amar Das (ruled 1552-1574), the third guru, had a well dug at Goindwal on the Beas River. Even though Nanak had stated that the only true shrine for his followers was in their hearts. Amar Das believed that changing circumstances required new initiatives, and so the well at Goindwal with its eighty-four steps became a place of pilgrimage and a focus of special rites and festivals.

The fourth guru, Ram Das (ruled 1574-1581), enjoyed the favor of Akbar (ruled 1556-1605), the ruler of the Mughul Empire. With the emperor's permission a village was set-up near a pool of water once dear to Nanak. This village became the holy city of the Sikhs, Amritsar, which means "pool of nectar."

Conflicts With the Mughul Empire

Under Arjan (ruled 1581-1606), the fifth guru, the Sikh community

constructed large water reservois, began to build the Golden Temple of Amritsar, and enlarged the small pool into an artificial lake. The temple had four doors, an indication that unlike Hindu shrines, it was open on all sides and that members of the four principal castes had equal status as disciples. Guru Arjan also gathered the hymns of the first four gurus and put them into the Adi Granth, which was enshrined in the Golden Temple.

Arjan composed the hymn of peace, which is sung at Sikh funerals: I do not keep the Hindu fast or the Muslim Ramadan. I serve him alone who is my refuge. I serve the One Master who is also Allah. I will not worship with the Hindu, nor like the Muslim go to Mecca. I shall serve him and no other.

When Jahangir (ruled 1605-1627) succeeded to the Mughul throne, the tolerance of Akbar's reign toward the Sikhs turned to hostility. The emperor summoned Arjan to his court and demanded the deletion from the Adi Granth of all passages opposing Islamic and Hindu orthodoxy. When Arjan refused, Jahangir had him tortured and executed. Arjan's successor, Hargobind (ruled 1606- 1644), obeyed his father's last command to "sit fully armed on his throne and maintain an army to the best of his ability." He moved the center of Sikh power from the plains into the hills.

Guri Gobind Singh and the Khalsa

The Sikh struggle against the Mughul Empire continued. The ninth guru, Tegh Bahadur (ruled 1666-1675), was executed by Aurangzeb (ruled 1658-1707). The tenth guru, Gobind Singh (1675-1708), who was known as "the lion," reunited the Sikhs in a fellowship of suffering and triumphant devotion.

In 1699 he founded the Khalsa (community of the pure) and called a gathering of Sikh warriors. Reminding them of the dangers of their situation, the guru called for five volunteers to die for the Sikh cause, claiming that God demanded a blood sacrifice. One by one, the leader led five warriors into his tent and emerged four times with a bloody sword. After the fifth man had gone into the tent, Gobind brought out all his warriors alive. A goat had been substituted for the sacrifice of the five men.

Gobind Singh then administered to the five heroes the rite of *pahul*, a kind of initiation by the sword into a new kind of brotherhood of soldier saints. He gave them nectar to drink, and each man received a two-edged dagger, was henceforth to the known as singh (lion), and was identified by special symbols, the five Ks. He was not to cut the hair of his head or beard (kesh), and he was to carry a comb (kangha) and wear a steel bracelet (kara), a sword (kirpan), and short pants (kacch). The uncut hair of the head was to be kept in a topknot under a turban. Women could join the khalsa, too. They were to receive a single-edged dagger and to have the title of kaur (princess). Thereafter, members of all castes were welcome into the Sikh community.

When Guru Gobind Singh opened the Sikh religion to members of all the Hindu castes, many from the lower castes eagerly embraced the faith. The guru commanded his followers to discard the sacred thread and to avoid all temples and shrines except those established by the Sikhs. When all four of his sons were assassinated, he proclaimed that the line of the gurus would come to an end with himself. In the future there would be only the khalsa, the community of Sikhs, and their holy book, the Adi Granth. To this day Sikhs bow only to their book of scripture. They are faithful to the command of the last guru: "He who wishes to be hold the Guru, let guru: "He who wishes to be hold the Guru, let him search the Granth."

Though the khalsa is open to men and women of all castes, its members form an elite within the Sikh community. They are admitted only after an Initiation ceremony at which they pledge themselves to an austere code of conduct. They are to bathe at dawn each morning and then to spend sometime in meditation. They are to avoid liquor tobacco, and narcotics. They are to avoid liquor tobacco, and narcotics. They pledge loyalty to the teaching of the gurus and the Adi Granth and swear to join the crusade for righteousness in the world. During the initiation ceremony each candidate comes before the assembly and says: "Waheguru jt ka Khalsa, sri Waheguru ji kt fateh" (The khalsa is of God, the victory is to God). He or she is given nectar to drink, which is then sprinkled on the hair and eyes.

Sikhism in the Modern Era

After the death of the last guru, the Sikhs became increasingly rebellious. One of their leaders, Banda Singh (1670-1716), was captured with seven hundred followers and executed at Delhi. Members of the khalsa took refuge in the hill country, coming out at opportune times to challenge Mughul power. In 1799 the Sikhs captured Lahore and made it the capital of the Sikh kingdom of Ranjit Singh (1780-1839). This kingdom dominated the Punjab and other areas of northwest India. Many *gudwaras* (Sikh shrines) were built at this time, and the Golden Temple at Amritsar was restored to its former splendor. Ranjit Singh's administration also granted religious freedom to Hindus and Muslims.

During the nineteenth century, the Sikhs fought valiantly against the British invaders. When the khalsa was finally crushed in 1849, the Sikh realm was annexed to British India. Because of the fairness of the British administration, however, the Sikhs remained loyal to the British during the Great Mutiny of 1857 and became welcome recruits in the British army. Later the whole Punjab prospered when the British built a system of canals there.

When independence came to the subcontinent in 1947, the Sikhs were bitterly disappointed at Britain's decision to partition the Punjab. West Punjab was given to Pakistan and East Punjab to India. Sikhs and Hindus subsequently joined in a bloody war against the Muslims in Pakistan that resulted in over a million deaths. Eventually two and a half million Sikhs were forced to migrate to East Punjab. Many places sacred to Sikhs, such as the birthplace of Nanak, were left in Pakistan. The Sikh demand for a separate state has continued into the late twentieth century. Sikh fndamentalists furned to violence and occupied the Golden Temple at Amritsar. Not only was there bloodshed when it was stormed in 1984 by national troops on orders from the Prime Minister of India. Indira Gandhi. In reprisal, she was assassinated by one of her body guards, a Sikh. Gandhi was followed in office by her son. Rajiv, as communal violence flared. Sikhs were menaced and attacked throughout the land. Government efforts to pacify the situation were blocked by longstanding resentments and hatred between

followers of the different religions. Moderate Sikh leaders were assassinated by fellow Sikhs. Unrest in the Punjab, where the majority of Sikhs still live, became a threat to secular democracy in India.

Sikh Customs

Sikhs are expected to follow the *Rehat Maryada* (Guide to the Sikh Way of Life), a document drawn up at a meeting of leading Sikh authorities and associations held at Amritsar in 1931. A Sikh is defined as anyone who believes in one God, the ten gurus and their teaching, and the Adi Granth. There is no priesthood. Every Sikh is supposed to strive to serve the community of the faithful, lead a life of prayer and meditation, and recite or read a prescrived number of hymns each day.

Visits to Gudwaras

Sikhs are supposed to visit the local gudwara often. The gudwaras vary greatly in size and appearance; some gudwaras are magnificent temples in the elaborate Mughul style; others are simple buildings. All must have a copy of the Adi Granth inside, and all must fly the nishan sahib, the yellow flag of Sikhism.

Each congregation meets in the name of the guru; in fact gudwara means "home of the guru." The main room of the center is the one in which the Adi granth is displayed on cushions, usually beneath a canopy. The congreagation may assemble in the morning or evening; there is no set time or day for services. Men and women remove their shoes before entering the presence of the Adi Granth and cover their heads out of respect. Any man or woman can rad from the holy book. Offerings are made and hymns are sung. Worshipers do not turn their backs on the Adi Granth as they leave but walk backward out of the room. At some festivals the Adi Granth is taken in a procession around the town, accompanied by musicians and singers, and on some occasions it is read aloud to the population.

Community Life

The congregation of each gudwara elects its own officers and votes

on all important matters. Women can be present at meetings, but they do not usually participate in the discussions. Over the years the Sikhs have had many differences of opinion, and one of the schismatic groups, the Namdharis, believes that the line of the gurus did not die out with Gobind Singh. In recent years some Sikhs have adopted secular habits, though any man who discards the turban and cuts his hair is considered an apostate. Readmission to the community is allowed only after a period of penance.

Although Sikhism has been opposed to the caste system since the time of Nanak, caste distinctions still exist among believers, atleast to some degree. The largest Sikh caste today is that of the jats (farmers). Next come the skilled workers, followed by members of the upper classes.

Sikhs differ also on the matter of eating meat. Some eat beef, and others eat all meat except beef. Still others are vegetarians who do not eat meat, fish, or eggs. At community meals (langars), no meat is served.

Ceremonies

Births are joyous occasions for the Sikhs. As soon as the mother has recovered, the entire family visits the gudwara to offer thanks. Babies names are chosen with great care.

Sikhs have always opposed the Hindu custom of child marriages. Since Sikhs regard marriage as a binding contract, adultery is a serious breach of faith. Divorce is discouraged. Widows may remarry. Most marriages are between members of the same social group or caste. Sikhs are monogamous, and in accord with the teaching of then founder, they show respect to women.

Funerals usually are held on the day after death. Although burials at sea or in the earth are allowed the accepted method of disposing of the dead cremation. The body is washed by members of the family, who see that the five Ks are worn. Then a procession of family members and mourners companies the body to a pyre, and afterwards the ashes may be thrown into a river.

Silaparamita (*perfection of character*)

Philosophical deity. Buddhist. Spiritual offspring of Ratnasambhava. Colour: white. Attributes: floral prayer wheel and jewelled staff.

Sindhu River goddess. Hindu (Vedic). Identified only in the Rg Veda and of unknown source.

Sinhanada (*lion toar)*

Physician god. Buddhist-Lamaist [Tibet]. A variety of Avalokitesvara. Typically depicted with stretched ear-lobes and attended by a lion. Colour: white. Attributes: cup, fly whisk, image of the Amitabha on the crown, lotus, moon disc, rosary, skin, snake, sword and trident. Three eyed. Also accounted amongst one of a series of medicine *buddhas* or *sMan-bla.*

Sinivali

Minor goddess of prosperity. Hindu (Vedic). Associated specifically with the boon of children. The mistress of the nuclear family. She is depicted as a matronly lady.

Sin in Hinduism

Except in mythology, in no other scriptures are there any references to Sin. Hinduism very scientifically deals with sin, explaining the Law of Karma, of Cause and Effect. All the parables in mythology explain how to deal with sins in a very positive manner. When the child puts his hand in fire, he gets burnt. His action here is *due to ignorance of the power of fire.* The child did not commit a sin, but due to ignorance of the truth that fire burns, he did a bad Karma and he had the result of getting burnt. Hinduism looks at all actions in the manner of the example quoted above. *We all sin or do ban Karmas due to ignorance. Ignorance is the root cause of all evils. Knowledge eradicates ignorance.* That is the way the idea of sin is explained in Hinduism. Christainity has stressed sin and fear of God and Hell. Hinduism, as I said before, stands against the doctrine of sin. Swami Ramakrishna Paramahamsa always looked down upon the western idea that human beings are sinners. The Bhagavad Gita says: "Even if thou art the worst of sinners, thou

shalt cross the ocean of sin by the bark of wisdom.'' (Bhagavad Gita Chap. 4-36). Adi Sankaracharya, in his doctrine of Advaita, looks at ignorance as Maya or Illusion and time and again had written that Knowledge is the only answer for all human problems. Hinduism forbids guilty consciousness in any form.

The scriptures state that, "Even God cannot save a man who goes under self-pity and quilty consciousness.''

An advanced Yogi will look at a devotee, prostitute and a murderer alike, because he knows that we are all part of an evolutionary process. Some are far ahead and going very fast towards God and some are at the starting gate and going at snail's pace to God. Some are divine in form and some are in the mental state of beasts, even though they have human forms.

The Bhagavad Gita states, ''Yoga-Union with the Divine—is for all.'' So we all will achieve salvation one day. Only the time factor differs from one individual to another. God has given us free will, so that we can decide when to reach God. Some experiment with their lives and take millions of years to reach God, and some mentally comprehend the Truth and reach God very fast by following the methods discovered by Christlike masters called Rishis. So to the Hindu who believes in the truth, ''Salvation is for all'', the words ''Sin and Sinner'' do not mean much at all.

Sita (*furrow*)

Origin Hindu (Epic and Puranic).

[India]. Chthonic or earth goddess.

Known period of warship circa 300 BC and earlier through to present day times. *Synonyms* an avatara of Laksmi.

Centre (s) of cult nonespecific.

Art references sculptures generally in bronze, but also in stone.

Literary sources Ramayana of Valmiki and later Puranic literature.

In Vedic mythology Sita is strictly and earth deity, born from a furro and associated with ploughing and ploughed fields. She appears as the consort of the rain gods Indra and Parjanya. She

usually stands to the right of Rama. In later times, effectively from 200 AD onwards, Sita (see also Radha) is the consort of Rama, one of the major reincarnations of the god Vishnu, though she is generally eclipsed by the goddess Laksmi with whom she is seen as a separate aspect.

Legend gives Sita an unhappy life, though she epitomizes the perfect Hindu wife. Early in her marriage to Rama she is abduceted by the foreign god Ravana, who carries her off to Lanka [Sri Lanka], where he imprisons her in a garden. Maintaining total fidelity to her husband, she returns to him inviolate, but he is sceptical of her purity and rejects her. Eventually, when she has threatened to immolate herself through the inner fire of her purity, Rama grudgingly has her back, though only briefly. His doubts return and, pregnant, she is banished to exile where she gives birth to twin sons. Rama's rejection finally takes its toll. Sita begs her mother, the earth, for salvation, whereupon a golden throne rises from the ground. She takes her place on it and descends forever whilst Rama is left eternally to mourn his loss. Attributes: blue lotus and a single braid of hair.

Sitala (mata) (*possibly meaning mother cold*')

Mother goddess. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). One of seven *Saktis* who in later Hinduism became regarded as of evil intent, inflicting sickness. Particularly known from Bengal where she may be identified with the goddess Kali. Usually standing naked upon a lotus or riding an ass. Alternatively symbolized by a stone on which a face is painted. Attribute: water-jar.

Sitapatra (*with a white umbrella*)

Goddess. Buddhist (Mahayana). An emanation of Vairocana and a female *bodhisattva* or buddha-designate. Colour: white. Attributes: arrow, bow, hook, noose, parasol, prayer wheel and white staff. Sometimes three-eyed and three-headed.

Sitatara (*the white Tara*')

Goddess. Buddhist-Lamaist [Tibet]. Of mild disposition, she is regarded as one of the forms of the goddess Tara and an emanation

of Amoghasiddhi or Vairocana. In later times she became identified as a female variety of Avalokitesvara-Padmapani. By tradition she is the incarnation of a Chinese princess. Colour: white. Attributes: arrow, blue or white lotus, bow, image of Amoghasiddhi, jewel, moon dise and rosary. Three-or seven-eyed.

SIVA or Shiv or Shiva (*the destroyer*)

Origin Hindu [India]. Principal creative and destructive god.

Known period of worship circa 300 BC, and probably earlier as Rudra, until present.

Synonyms accredited with more than a thousand epithets in Hindu writings (see also Bhairava, Khandoba).

Centre (s) of cult Benares, etc.

An references sculptures genetally in broaza but also in stone: reliefs.

Literary sources Ramayana epic and Puranic texts.

Siva is a deity with the linked roles of both creator and destroyer of life, more gernerally the latter. He personifies the inexorable passage of time and out of destruction he creates new life. He may have evolved from the Vedic storm god Rudra, though he is now thought to be an older pre-Indo-European deity whose attributes appear on seals from the Indus Valley civilization. His consort, or more precisely his female aspect, is Sakti, but he is also closely linked with the terrible Kali and the goddess Sati.

He is generally depicted in the role of an ascetic with a blue-painted throat, attributed to holding the primal poison *halahala* in his throat before swallowing it to save mankind from its deadly effect. His sacred animal is the bull Nandi. He bears four arms (less commonly two) which hold a a variety of attributes including a bow, a club to which is fastened a skull, a drum (damaru), representing the rhythm of creation, and a noose. He has a strong association with fire and may hold a ball of flam—the destructive corollary to creation. His symbol is the *linga* (phallus), often accompanied by the female *yoni* and these objects in stone may form the focus of worship.

The Saivite sect envisage Siva as creator, preserver and destroyer and he is manifest in three aspects of his own divine power. As the ascetic, represented by the *Yogi*, he is in his destructive aspect. His consorts are *Kali* and Durga. He destroys without emotion. The *Yogi* is naked, smeared with ashes and with matted hair, sitting under a banyan tree holding a beggar's bowl. As the 'lord of the dance', Nataraja, Siva's steps follw the mythm of the universal forces. He dances in a circle of fire, treading upon the dwarfish figure who is the personification of ignorance (see also Vamana). In this aspect he can he drawn as a jolly figure, a drinker of wine and a hunter, as the linga, the form of Siva which devotees generally worship, he is the symbol of creative powers. In his cosmic capacity he appears as Nataraja.

Legend has it that Siva lives in Kailas, a place beyond the Himalaya. The Lingayats, a particular Saivite sect founded in the twelfth century AD, may carry a small stone linga mounted in a silver box and worn round the neck or arm. Chiefly centred on southern India, ssanctuaries to Siva are often home to devadasis, troupes of dancing girls who also serve as cultic prostitutes. Siva also enjoys popular worship as a domestic deity. See also Panacanana.

Sivalinga, Yantra and Mandala

Siva Linga is part of Tantrism. Today, you will never see a Hindu temple without Siva Linga standing in a Yoni. According to the Siva Purana it represents the space in which the universe creates and annihilates itself again and again. As per Tantras, it represents the phallus and yoni—a representation of male and female attributes of God. It also represents the creative principle of life.

A Yantra is a geometrical figure like a dot (Bindu) or an inverted triangle in its simplest form. There are very complicated figures, symmetrical and nonsymmetrical, under the name Yantras. All these figures are based on certain mathematical forms and certain methods. Yantras represent deities like Siva, Vishnu, Ganesha, Krishna and especially Mother Goddess Shakti. Mantra and Tantra are very much interconnected. Thought is expressed in subtle form as a Mantra and the same thought is expressed in pictorial form as a



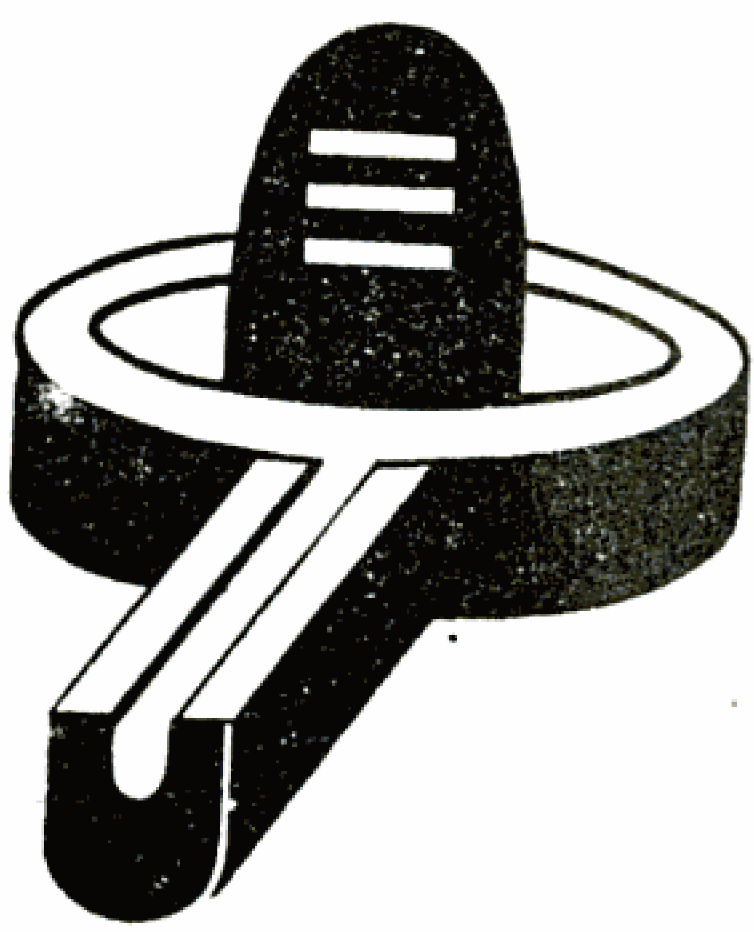


Fig. SIVA LINGA

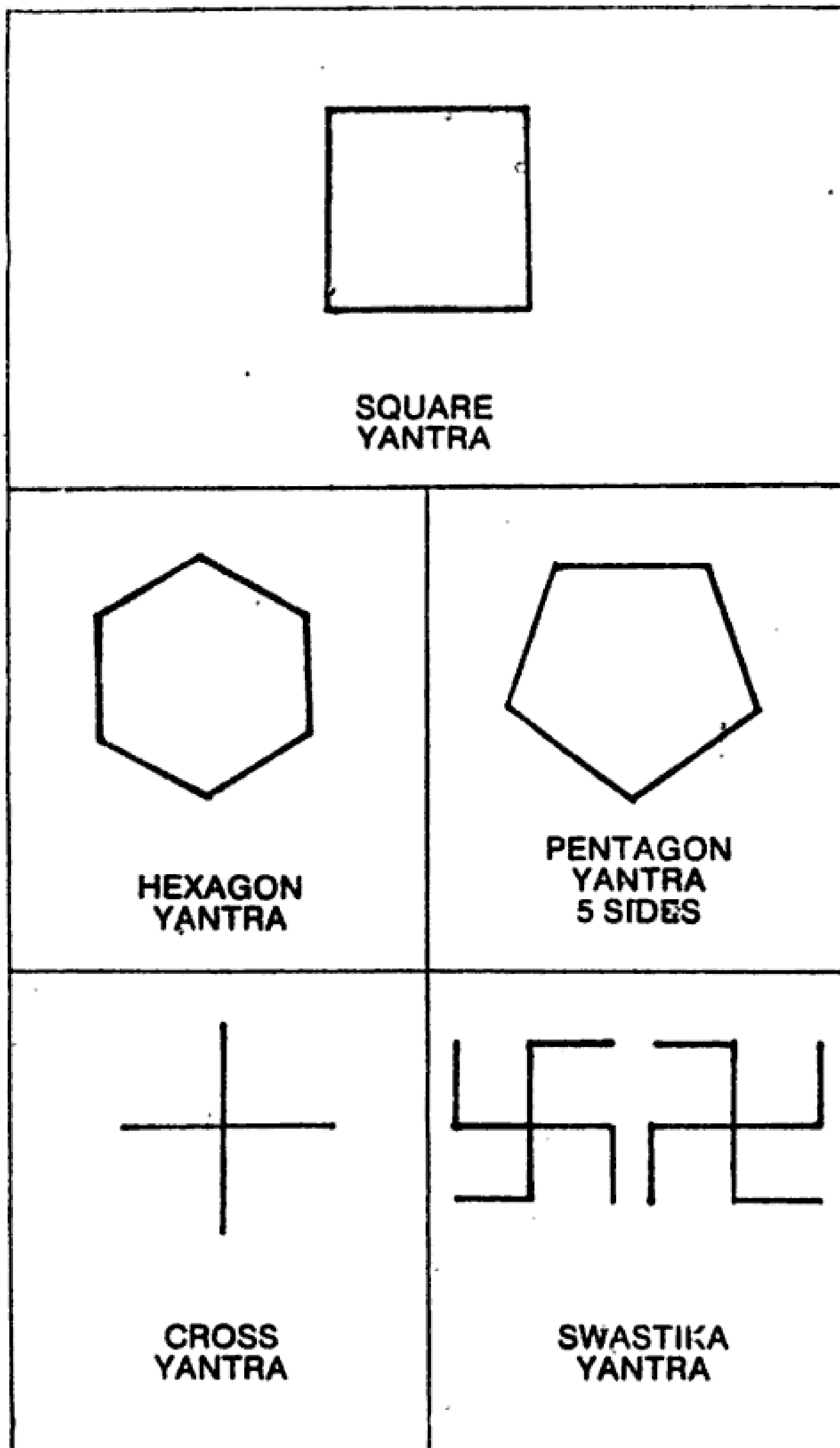
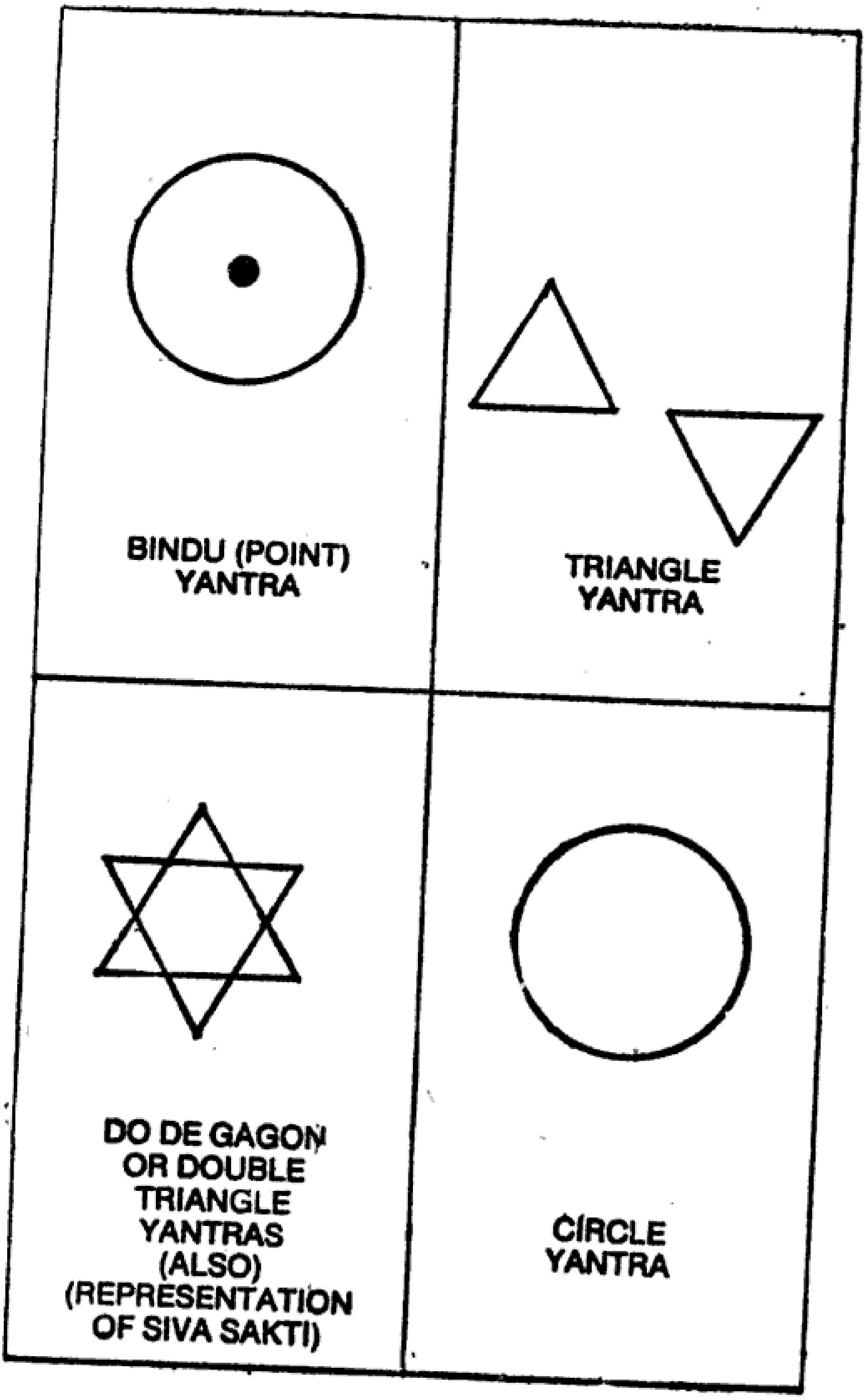


Fig. SIMPLE YANTRAS


BINDU (POINT)
YANTRA
TRIANGLE
YANTRA
DO DE GAGON
OR DOUBLE
TRIANGLE
YANTRAS
(ALSO)
(REPRESENTATION
OF SIVA SAKTI)
CIRCLE
YANTRA

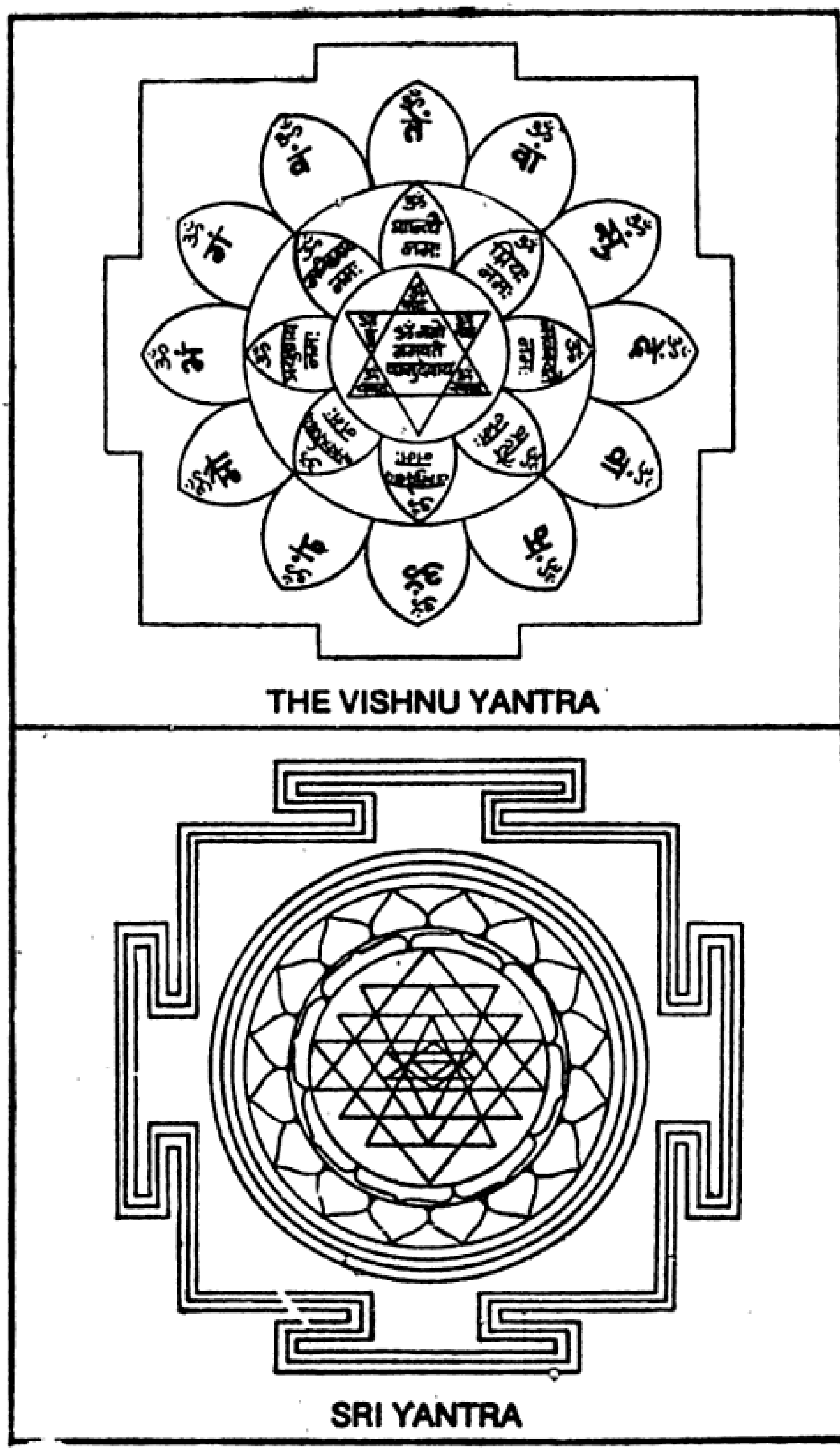
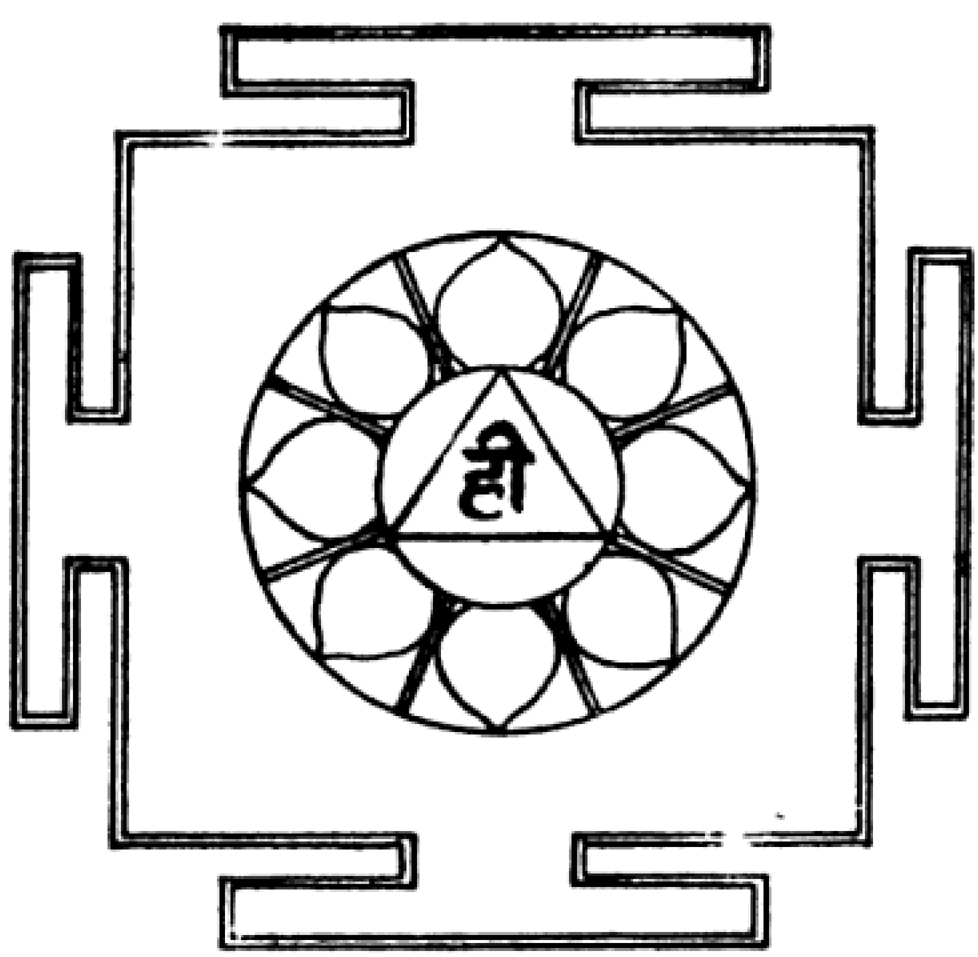


Fig. COMPLEX YANTRAS



THE GANAPATI YANTRA



THE MAHANIRVANA YANTRA

Yantra. Believe it or not, there are more than 900 Yantras. One of the most important Yantra is Sri Yantra, or Navayoni Chakra, representing both Siva and Shakti. You will see this Yantra exhibited in Shakti temples.

Mandala means a "circle". It is actually the most complicated form of Yantra. It comes in all shapes and it is very artistic in nature. In Hinduism *Mandalas* are used as aids to meditation. The beauty of Hindu temples lies in the number of, Mandalas carved on the stones of the temple walls. A Mandala consists of a center and lines and circles placed geometrically around the centre. The center usually is a dot (Bindu).

You can see Mandalas even in Buddhist viharas. Behind each Mandala there are volumes of thoughts. Sometimes looking at a Mandala is like looking through a kaleidoscope.

Sivottama (*highest Siva*)

Minor god. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). One of a group of emancipated vidyesvaras (lords of knowledge) considered to be aspects of Siva.

Skanda

Origin Hindu (Epic and Puranic) [India]. God of war.

Known period of worship circa 300 BC or earlier until present.

Synonyms Kumara, Karttikeya;

Subrahmanya; many other minor epithets.

Centres (s) of cult various. Art references sculptures gencrally in bronze, but also in stone.

Literary sources Ramayana and Mahabharata epics; Puranic texts.

Regarded as the leader of the divine army of gods. One of the sons of Siva, his birth is accounted in bizarre fashion. The gods persuaded Siva and Parvati to curb their incessant love making. The vast quantity of unused semen then had to be disposed of. After shuttling it between fire (Agni) and water (Ganges), Brahma placed it on the mountain of the rising sun where, after ten

millennia, it became Skanda.

His consorts include Kaumari (Devasena) and Valli, and his sons are Sakha, Visakha and Naigameya. Perceived as virile and youthful, his name may signify the emission of semen. He is also seen as 'one who jumps' whilst fighting and his sacred animals include the peacock and the cockerel, the latter being both aggressive and a jumper. Attributes: banner, cockerel, hatchet, peacock feather and staff. He may also carry a wider assortument of objects and weapons. As Karttikeya he is often depicted bearing six heads and twelve arms.

Smrti (*tradition*)

Minor god. Buddhist (Mahayana).

Sodasi (*girl of sixteen*)

Minor goddess. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). One of a group of *mahavidyas* personifying the *Sakti* of Siva. Aspects include Divyaratri.

Soma (*essence*)

Minor god. Hindu (Vedic, Epic and Puranic). The deification of the sacred yellow drink soma. Also the consort of Surya. Regarded in later Hinduism as the dikpala of the northern direction and as one of a group of vasu deities answering to the god Indra. Attributes: hook, lotus and prayer wheel. See also Candra.

Somaskanda

God. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). Aspect of the god Siva. Of uncertain origin, but possibly representing a composite trio of Siva with his consort Uma (Parvati) and his son Skanda (as a boy). Four-armed. Attributes of Siva: axe, corpse and hatchet. Attribute of Uma: lotus. Attributes of Skanda: book, head-dress, mango fruit and ornament.

Sravistha

Minor goddess of fortune. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). A benevolent *naksatra*: daughter of Daksa and wife of Candra (Soma).

Sri (devi) (*prosperity*)

1. Goddess. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). An early name which was syncretized with that of Laksmi to form Sri-Laksmi.

2. Goddess. Buddhist-Lamaist [Tibet]. One of a group of *dharmapala* with terrible appearance and royal attire who protect the Dalai Lama. A manifestation of the goddess Devi sometimes seen in company with Visnu, when conventionally she stands on his right. Her breasts are covered by a narrow band of cloth. She may be invoked to provide wealth (see also Laksmi). Her retinue includes the goddesses of the seasons and her animal is a mule. Colour: blue. Attributes: chiefly cup and staff but on occasion several other objects including a pink lotus. Three-eyed and may be three-headed. Also Lha Mo.

3. Goddess. *Jain.*

Srikantha (*beautiful throat*)

Minor deity. Hind (Epic and Puranic). One of a group of emancipated *vidyesvaras* (lords of knowledge) considered to be aspects of Siva, in this instance referring to his darkish blue neck. Also one of the *ekadasarudras* or eleven forms of Rudra. Attributes: hatchet and trident.

Srivasumukhi (*excellent-faced*)

Minor goddess. Buddhist (Mahayana). An attendant of Vasudhara.

Srivasundhara (*earth*)

Minor goddess Buddhist (Mahayana). An attendant of Vasudhara.

Srividyadevi (*of excellent knowledge*)

Minor goddess. Hindu. A deity of terrifying appearance. Attributes: necklace of bones, teeth.

Sruti and Smriti Literature

The Hindu scriptures can be broadly classified into two groups. One is Sruti (that which is heard) literature and the other is Smriti (that which is remembered) literature. Both these literature are considered as 'revelations of God' just like all Biblical literature

are considered 'God-inspired literature.' Both Sruti and Smriti literature are further divided as shown in the next page.

What are the foremost sacred books of Hinduism? They are known as the Vedas, which mean 'knowledge.' There are four Vedas and they claim to teach a man the highest truths that can lead him to God. The first three Vedas are known as Triple Vedas.

1. Rig Veda—(Veda a Hymns) 1028 hymns (10 book) to gods like Indra and Agni.

2. Yajur Veda—(Veda of Liturgy) knowledge of rites. This Veda is based on Rig-Veda. It contains the rituals explaining 'How to perform' all rituals. It consists of prose and verse. This Veda is indeed a priestly handbook, even describing the rules and regulations of how to make an altar. Sacrifice is one of the most important parts of this Veda.

3. Sama Veda— (Veda of Music) knowledge of chants. Sama means melody. The classical Indian music originated from Sama Veda. This Veda consists of 1549 stanzas. This Veda also is based on Rig Veda and stanzas from Sama.

2. Brahmanas-directions for performance of rituals

3. Aranyakas-contain-Mantras and interpretations of rituals.

4. Upanishads-A number of texts revealing the ultimate spiritual truths and various suggestions of ways to realize them. The word Upanishad is composed of Upa (near) Ni (down) and Shad (to sit). An Upanishad is a teaching taught by the Guru when the disciple sits very close to the Guru so that nobody overhears the teachings.

How many Upanishads are there? There are more than 108 books of Upanishads.

The 13 most important Upanishads are:

Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Aitareya, Taittireya, Chandogya, Brihad-Aranyaka, Kaushitaki, Shvetasvatara and Maitri. Some of the Upanishads are named after the great sages who were featured in them. Those sages are Mandukya. Shvetasatara, Kaushitaki and Maitri. Other Upanishads

are named after the first word of the work.

We also have 11 minor Yogic Upanishads. The most important among them are Yoga Tattva, Dhyana Bindu, and the Nada Bindu. Yoga Tattva consists of all the details about yogic practices. Nada Bindu as the name depicts deals with the auditory phenomena that accompany certain yogic exercises. Dhyana Bindu deals with syllable Aum and with many mystic revelations.

Stanitakumara

God: Jain [India]. One of the deities grouped under the general title of bhavanavasi (dwelling in places). Of youthful appearance

Suddhodana

Primordial god. Buddhist. The father of the Buddha. The deified king of the Sakya tribe from which the Buddha descended; his consort is Mayadevi.

The Great Leap

Hanuman in a colossus form stood upon the Mahendra mountain which had till then loomed large and high, now looked like a small stone at his feet. He stood there resolved to lean across the sea. He held his breath and bent his knees and swung back his arms in readiness. Then he bowed to gods and his father, the wind-god and grew more in stature. With the increasing pressure of his feet the mountain shook and water coozed out of the hills, and big rocks and boulders rolled down with a loud report. Then Hanuman roared like a thundering cloud, his hair stood on end and his tail frisked in the air. Then with full concentration of mind and all the energy he drew in his neck, laid back his ears and sprang.

It was superb! It was the greatest leap ever performed. As he sped tall trees were uprooted and followed him for some distance, such was impact of the velocity of the flight. Hanuman's eyes flashed like two bright flames and his upraised tail looked like a royal standard raised high on a pole. He shot through the air like at comet, pushing clouds aside. The wind roared and groaned and high and huge waves like hills rose in the sea. As he sped, the water of the sea parted into two and water animals could be seen, as when

the clothes are removed from the person and the body is seen naked.

Halfway to Lanka, the golden mountain Mainak rose and surfaced on its glistening wings from the deep ocean floor to provide Hanuman some timely rest and said, "O Hanuman! rest a while and let me repay my debt to your father."

"Who are you?" snapped Hanuman, as he paused for a moment in the sky.

"I am Mainak, the son of mountain king Himvan and brother of the Ganga. I have been living on the deep ocean floor for fear of Indra's thunderbolt. In ancient times, all the other mountains had wings like me and they flew as they liked flattening flat the kingdoms. This gave us a bad name and people complained to Indra. The Indra in his fury cut off our wings, but I escaped this mutilation by taking refuge under the sea.

"But how are you indebted to my father, the wind-god?"

"When Indra pursued me with his thunderbolt, then your father carried me away and thus he saved my wings," replied Mainak. "Let me require my debt. Please honour me by taking a little rest on me.

Hanuman thanked Mainak for his hospitality and sped away determined not to take any rest during the jump. To oblige him, he only touched golden Mainak with his finger-tip.

Then Surasa, the mother of Nagas, at the express request of gods, assumed a hideous form of a *Rakshashi* and blocked Hanuman's course of flight, to test his courage and wisdom. "You are my food, I shall devour your today, enter into my mouth," said Surasa.

"I am on Rama's service. He is the king of all the earth and you live within it. So it is your *Dharma* to help me, however, I swear to return to you after my mission is over," replied Hanuman. As Surasa was eager to test Hanuman's valour, she insisted on devouring him and opened her wide mouth. Hanuman then grew ten leagues in size and then thirty and then fifty and so on. Surasa accordingly gaped her month more in proportion to Hanuman's

exppanding size. Then at once Hanuman contracting his size entered the cavity of her mouth and came out instantly and said: "Mother you have had your wish, now let me go, I bow to you."

Then Surasa, the Naga mother, highly pleased said, "Go wherever you like, your efforts to serve Rama will be crowned with success. You have passed the test so brilliantly."

But another trial waited Hanuman. During the course of his further flight, he felt his speed obstructed, because a Rakshashi living in the sea caught him by the shadow and held him back. She pulled him closer and opened her ugly mouth wide to devour. Enraged Hanuman entered her mouth and tore his way out with his sharp finger nails through his stomach. The demoness instantly collapsed and her thick blood spread through the blue water of the ocean.

Thus through these trials and tribulations, he pressed forward with great speed and saw on the horizon rising golden Lanka atop three green hills, as if built in clouds. Lanka looked like a beautiful dream. Hanuman landed on a nearby hill covered with beautiful fruit and flower trees and fragrant creepers and shrubs.

The city was surrounded by flaming high golden walls and then a moat, full of lilies. many powerful Rakshashas guarded the city day and night. The high and battlemented gates were adorned with streaming flags and banners. The divine architect Vishwakarma built it with immaculate care and deliberation. Hanuman looked at if in amazement. He came cautiously towards its northern gate. Hanuman found Lanka impregnable even for gods without a fierce battle. Then he thought of entering the city at night in an invisible form so as to escape detection. The awe-inspiring Lanka made Hanuman heave a number of deep sights and he was lost in deep thoughts. He said to himself, "How can I see mother Sita? I must plan my course of action with great care and deligeration so that I am not detected. I should enter the city by diminishing my size." Thus he pondered and waited for the night impatiently.

Gradually, the shadows lengthened into afternoon and evening came and then night. Hanuman diminished himself to the size of a small monkey no bigger than a domestic cat and entered the city. In

the meanwhile, the moon rose and drowned the whole city in its milky brightness. This made his search for Sita easy. This white palaces glistening in the soft moonlight, the spacious and multi-storeyed mansions with golden pillars, gates and their architectural wealth and banners on their tops filled Hanuman with awe and wonder. Then, suddenly the guardian deity of the city, Lanka, appeared before Hanuman from nowhere. This dideous form then thundered in enquiry. "Who are you? What 's your purpose here? Tell me the whole truth or you are dead the next moment." "But who are you to talk like this? Tell me this first" said Hanuman.

"I am Lankini, the guardian deity. You little monkey, how dare you enter the city by setting me at naught."

"I am indeed a small monkey, O lady. I have come here to see this beautiful city and after satisfying my curiosity I shall return.

Lankini then spoke harsh words, and struch Hanuman on the left cheek, with force. Infuriated Hanuman returned the blow with his left hand and she fell down on the ground reeling, but she rose soon on her feet and remembering the prophesy that when she was knocked down by a monkey, the Lanka, which she guarded so zealously, would be razed to the ground. Lankini then said to Hanuman, "The doom of Lanka is imminent. The prophesy is coming true. Please enter, if you will and search for Sita at leisure."

Lanka the Golden City

Hanuman, then jumped over a high doorless wall in an out-of-the - way manner and landed on his left foot, for that indicated victory over the enemy.

The broad roads of the city were strewn with flowers and demons here and there laughed or blew trumpets. Hanuman went along the highways and heard damsels singing sweetly to the accompaniment of instrumental music. He saw spies either with their heads shaven clean or with their locks matted. *Rakshashas* were of various shapes and sizes, of different colours and had with them many types of weapons. They were either handsome or hideous. In short it was an assortment of demons and demonesses.

Hanuman examined mansions one after the other and saw many beautiful demonesses either alone or in their husbands company. Some sang and played on instruments, other slept and snored. He saw many shameless scenes too, while looking into the windows and doors. He saw *Rakshashas* who were beautiful and powerful even when drunk and asleep. He saw newly married couples, sporting amorously. He saw lovely ladies of golden or moon-like hue ministering to the needs of their lovers and husbands. Some were naked, some sad for separation from someone very special and dear to their souls. They wore sweet flowers and garlands. Their ornaments shown like lightning, but Sita pining for Rama was nowhere seen.

Finally, Hanuman came to Ravana's palace. Around it ran a wall, guarded by formidable demons. Hanuman jumped over this wall and landed inside the palace. Golden lamps on high posts burned there. The palace was well furnished with gold and silver worked doors and windows. It was filled with jewels and other precious things. Hanuman passed unnoticed by the seasoned warriors keeping the watch. The soft metallic laughter of amourously sporting damsels combined with jingling of their ornaments resounded all around.

Hanuman passed through many sprawling lawns, gardens, big halls and mansions of the princes and saw immeasurable wealth till he came to Ravana's personal residence, ever protected by tough warriors and *Rakshashis* of hideous looks. There Hanuman saw swift and light-footed steeds, mighty elephants with temporal sweat running down their faces and troops stationed at important road junctions and points.

Ravana's own palace was so resplendent with jewels, as beggar description. It was a veritable heaven on earth, Amidst various objects of luxury like ivory, jewels and pearls in a spacious courtyard stood huge aerial chariot Pushpaka, which Ravana had snatched from his brother Kubera. The Viman of transcendental beauty had golden flight of stairs, crystal windows. It was starred with sapphires, rubies, pearls and other precious stones. Hanuman got up the Viman, the masterpiece creation of Vishwakarma.

Hanuman searched all through this marvellous chariot and breathed in its fragrance but then he sniffed delicious smell of sumptuous dishes and got down and entered Ravana's bed-chamber, a superbly beautiful vast hall. It was past midnight and beautiful damsels with sweet garlands around their necks and ornaments on their persons lay in deep sleep on soft and thick woollen carpets. Their amorous sports had ceased and with that the jingling sound of their ornaments. These damsels asleep and lost in dreams had beautiful faces like lotuses in perpetual bloom. They gave out intoxicating fragrance. Their hair was dishevelled with dalliance. Under the influence of wine their clothes had fallen off and ornaments lay scattered about them. These beauties and high-born damsels enamoured of Ravana's pelf, power and splendour lay tumbled together with their beautiful faces lit by flaming lamps of gold. Each looked more beautiful than the other. On their gleaming faces love, fulfilment and joy were writ large. Hanuman did not take long in realising the futility of his search for Sita in that sensual paradise.

Then he entered another chamber and there he saw a crystal bed. A short flight of jewelled step led to this raised bed. Over it was a huge white silk canopy. On this gorgeous bed lay stretched Ravana, worn out from dalliance and drinking. Hanuman shrank back a little with awe on seeing Ravana's personal splendour and majesty of form. Ravana looked like another Mount Meru, at once so beautiful and so terrible. Around him slept various women matchless in their beauty and tenderness. Some of them still lay embracing their musical instruments. Amidst these beauties, he saw Mondodari, Ravana's chief queen of golden radiance, on a splendid bed. Her divine form and beauty made Hanuman think her to be Janaki and he leapt with delight, but the very next moment he corrected himself saying, "Sita is most devoted to Rama. The question of any kind of luxury for her in Rama's separation does not arise at all. The lady asleep must be somewhere else. How foolish of me to take her to be Sita!"

He searched the whole palace, peeped into all the doors and windows, looked into rooms and halls but he could not see Sita. Then held his breath for a long moment and sighed and said to

himself, "She must be dead. Ravana seems to have put her to death being disappointed in his efforts to make pious and chaste Sita yield. All my labours have gone waste. What will Angada and Jambavan think? It is better to die here than to return having failed in my mission. I have searched every nook and corner, every inch of the city, what more I can do?"

Hanuman was so non-pulsed for a moment that he did not know what to do. Then be began to search the places which he had not yet searched. He sprang up to action. He climbed up, opened the windows, unlatched the doors, walked, ran, crept and at times stood still like a rock in the course of his search, and once more his heart throbbed and sank and he said to himself, "Could the vulture Sampati be false? Perhaps he missed Sita seeing fall in the ocean from Ravana's grasp. Perhaps she was stifled to death by Ravana's mighty arms. Alas! she is not more alive. How shall I show my face on my return to Kishkindhya? Rama will not survive the failure of my mission. He will surely renounce his mortal body. Think what would happen to the rest? Instead of returning to Kishkindha empty handed, it would be far better to spend the rest of my life in the woods and at seashore as an ascetic. But why to linger on this life? Why not to put a stop to it at once?

Thus drowned in worry, he wrung his hands and his throat choked. But then, he caught sight of Ashoka Vana, so far left unsearched. Immediately he proceeded towards the Ashoka Vana, meditating of Rama. Hanuman prayed all the gods and goddesses to crown his endeavour with success. Resolved in his mind to see Janaki of moon-like face, Hanuman sprang over the wall of the park. There he found many kinds of flower and fruit laden trees. Birds sang sweet notes and the whole Vana resounded with it. There were several ponds of crystal clear water with golden flights of steps leading to the water. Lotuses were in full bloom and swans sported amidst them.

In the centre of the park stood a tall Sinsapa tree of golden leaves. At its root stood a golden platform. As the night faded into day and the sun rose, Hanuman climbed up that tree and hid himself in its thick branches and leaves and started musing, "If Sita be alive, she

is sure to repair to this beautiful and secluded place to say her morning prayers and to meditate upon Rama." Hidden in the leaves he surveyed all around.

In Ashoka Grove

Then suddenly Hanuman saw a beautiful but lean and thin female form, lost in thoughts and surrounded ugly *Rakshashis.* Care-worn and dejected, one wore a single soiled cloth and single braid of hair hanging down her bent back. Hanuman understood that she was Sita because she looked exactly alike the woman whom he had seen carried off by Ravana. She on the bare ground shedding tears and casting piteous glances all around. Her sad plight perplexed Hanuman and he said to himself, "Destiny is all powerful. It is for this fair lady, worthy of Rama in all respects, that Khara, Kushana and Trishra were killed, and mighty Vali slain. It is for her I am here in Lanka across the sea. There is nothing wrong even if Rama destroys the whole universe for her. She is worth all this and more."

Peeping through the thick leaves, Hanuman once again saw Sita of dishevelled dusty hair, sad and frightened, only sustained by Rama's rememberance. She looked like a creeper robbed of her flowers and fallen on earth and crushed. Hanuman wept silently to see Janaki's sad plight and did obeisance to Rama in imagination every now and then.

At early dawn, Ravana awoke with the chant of Vedic hymns and sweet music. Infatuated with Sita, he proceeded towards Ashoka Grove followed by his numerous beautiful wives. Hanuman hid himself behind the leaves, heard the jingling of the anklets and bracelets and then saw Ravana arrive there surrounded by the youthful beauties. Sita trembled like a plantain leaf in storm at his approach. She appeared like the moon in eclipse. Overwhelmed with grief, her mind travelled to Rama's lotus feet. With tearful eyes, throbbing heart and unquiet mind, she thought of Rama, her beloved husband, lord and protector.

Ravana then addressed Sita in these words, "Oh my love, why do you shrink at my sight? It is usual for a *Rakshasha* to possess

another's wife by force, but I have done nothing of the kind and beg your favour. O paragon of beauty, don't waste yourself like this. Be my prime queen and rule over me and my unlimited wealth, vast kingdom and young wives. I am renowned for my prowess throughout the three worlds. Rama, the ascetic is no match to me. How can Rama hope to wage a war against me and win you back? O goddess of my heart and mind, be pleased to yield to me."

Thus the ten-headed Ravana made an impasssioned appeal to janaki. Then Sita put a grass blade between herself and Ravana and replied, "Don't hope against hope. I am a high born woman and married to gently Rama. Your proposal is totally untenable. It is highly against any sense of righteousness and virtue that you should so behave. You are depraved and perverse. Splendour, however great, will vanish in no time in the hands of a fool like you. I am inseparable form Rama as light is form the sun. If you wish to enjoy your splendour, your wives and kingdom any more, befriend Rama, beg his forgiveness and return me to my lord. Escape form death is possible but not Rama's hands. It is already too late and in distant future Rama's invincible arrows will destroy you and your kingdom. Have your forgotten Janasthans's great devastation?"

At these words of stern warning, Ravana returned with anger, "O my beauty, you have insulted me and on that account you deserve instant death but my sincere love for you prevents it. I allow you two more months time to prepare yourself to share my bed. But if you remain adamant and refuse, you will be cooked and served in my breakfast."

Sita then remembering Rama replied, "Alas! it seems there is not a single good counsellor in Lanka. There is no atonement for your sins. You should be ashamed to utter filth in Rama's absence. I can reduce you to ashes even now by the fire of my chastity but don't have Rama's permission. You are a braggart and a coward otherwise you would not have abducted me in Rama's absence."

At these words, Ravana grew more terrible. He roared and gnashed his teeth, his red hot eyes rolled in wrath. He uttered threatening words and ordered the *Rakshashis* to bring Sita round by fair means

ro foul. Meanwhile, one Ravana's young wives embracing him amorously said, "Leave this wretched and luckless creature here, come let us sport."

Ravana returned to his private apartments and then *Rakshashis* began to harass Sita to bring her round to Ravana's wishes and Sita wept bitter tears helplessly in reply to their sinful utterances. When all persuasions failed they threatened her to make a meal of her soft body. Thereupon, she wept and sobbed afresh like a child. In that mood of dark despair thoughts and counter-thoughts struggled to have supremacy within her and she sank deeper and deeper in the sea of sorrow. She thought it best to hang herself with her long braid of hair from a limb of the tree under which she sat.

The Message

During the visit of Ravana, it was with great difficulty that Hanuman could restrain himself. He held the limb of the tree tightly, he hissed and bared his teeth in anger. His tail lashed and his eyes darted fiery glances. Now, when he saw the hideous horrors of the demonesses tormenting Sita, Hanuman was about to jump down from his seat on the Sinsapa tree that demoness Trijata, wearing three braids of hair, appeared and scolded the other Rakshashis for tesasing and tormenting Sita and shouted, 'You fool! stop it, for last night I saw in my dream Ravana vanquished by resplendent Rama and Lanka destroyed. I saw Rama entering Lanka on a white elephant and carrying Sita back home. O, your Rakshashis, stop this persecution of Sita for your own good. Fall at Sita's feet and beg her forgiveness.

Sita then saw many auspicious omens. Her left eye, hand and foot twitched and her courage returned and she gave up the idea of self-annihilation. Hanuman saw all this happen from his seat high in the branches of the tree and said to himself, "Now, it is time to console her. I shall not return without saying a few words of encouragement and hope, but let these *Rakshashis* retire first. Sita is sure to burst forth into cries on seeing me. Her cries will collect the Rakshashas and they will try to capture me. While assuming my own form I shall leap from one tree to another. No, I must be very careful lest my labours of crossing the sea are wasted. I should

communicate with her in a manner that she is not frightened. I shall begin with the utterance of Rama's name.

When at Trijata's narration of the ominous dream the *Rakshashis* disbanded and went to their respective guard-posts, Hanuman uttered, "Rama, Rama," and recited, "Rama the eldest son of Dasaratha, came to the forest in obedience to his father with Lakshmana and Sita. He killed Khara and other demons and then the false golden deer. Then Sita was kidnapped by Ravana and search parties were sent into all directions by Vanara King Sugriva I am Hanuman, I alone have found you after crossing the sea."

Sita looked up into the tree and beheld Hanuman and she was filled with many doublts and misgivings. Hanuman jumped down and very politely with joined palms said, "O worshipful mother! Are you Sita? From the auspicious marks on your person, the ascetiç dress you are wearing and your beauty, it appears that you are Janaki, the queen of Rama.

"Yes, my child! I'm Sita" she said, "the consort of Rama and daughter-in-law of King Dasaratha. In the thirteenth year, Dasaratha exiled us from Ayodhya to redeem his pledge to Kaikeyi. The crown was conferred on Bharata. While we lived in Dankaka forest, the wicked soul Ravana abducted me. He has given me two more months and I am sure to die at the end of this time-limit."

Thereupon Hanuman said to grief-stricken Sita, "Oh most piously worshipped lady, Rama the most mighty has sent me. Lakshmana, ever anxious for your well-being, sends you his salutations." Thus they began to converse in confidence. They spoke in sweet, soft and subdued tones, but when Hanuman came nearer, Sita grew suspicious thinking that he was no other than Ravana in a monkey's guise. But gradually her confidence returned and she thought, "No, this cannote be, Ravana. I should not suspect him," and then said, "Are you really Rama's messenger? How is it that friendship has developed between a man and a monkey?"

Once again, Hanuman removed her doubts and fears by praising Rama's virtues, by describing his regal signs that adorned his

person. He narrated in detail the story, how Sugriva had befriended Rama, how Sugriva and other monkeys had picked up the jewels dropped by her, later on recognised by Rama and Lakshmana, how Rama had killed Vali and crowned Sugriva, how when the rains had ceased monkey hosts were sent for search and how he flew across the sea to Lanka and searching for her arrived in Ashoka Park. Thus he established his identiy.

Sita's doubts were removed, her eyes were filled with tears of delight and her face shone like the round moon. Then Hanuman to gain further confidence gave Sita the gold ring, with Rama's name engraved on it. Rama had given it to Hanuman as a memento to be presented to Sita.

Sita received the signet ring with trembling hands and pounding heart, pressed it to her eyes with great joy and felt as if Rama himself was present there. Then beaming with affection she asked several questions about Rama, why has he not so far reduced the earth to ashes in anger? How he behaves while overwhelmed with grief and doubts? When shall Rama destroy Ravana and rescue her?'' Hanuman replied in polite words how in her separation, grief-stricken Rama has been subsisting on root and fruit, how pensive he has always been thinking of Sita and how he suffers from sleeplessness. Sita forgot her own sufferings thinking of her lord's sorrow and grief.

Sita and Hanuman talked together and Sita felt pleasure and pain alternately. She felt glad that Rama had not forgotten her but was pained to know of Rama's sufferings. He state was that of rain in sunshine. She heaved deep sighs and smiled. Hanuman could hardly bear the sad plight of Sita and said, "Oh worshipful! Rama will soon attack Lanka or if you please, I can carry you on my back across the ocean to Rama. Doubt not my prowess, mother. I can tear off this Lanka from its foundations and drown it in the sea." But Sita wondered how little Hanuman could do all that. Hanuman understood her doubts and then grew in stature to demonstrate his prowess. Sita then believed him but declined his offer as it was not in keeping with the honour and valour of Rama. Sita then told Hanuman how once at Chitrakuta a crow had clawed her and Rama

then highly enraged hurled Brahmastra to kill it. She asked Hanuman to narrate this happening to Rama and to say that she could not wait for long. She narrated one or two such intimate happenings so that Hanuman may use them as a proof of seeing Sita.

Lost in past memories and at the same time being overwhelmed with present grief, she broke forth in tears like a child again and again and said, "O hero! I dodn't know what message I should send Rama? He knows all. Only tell him that I embrace his lotus feet. That is all. Tell Lakshmana to come to deliver me from this prison." Then she lapsed into silence overcome with grief. She was rreluctant to part from Hanuman, at the same time she wished Hanuman a speedy return to Rama. Finally she said taking a jewel from her head, "Take it and give it to Rama. He will fondly look at it and believe you. My child, remove your fatigue and stay here hiding for a day if you will and then start on your back journey. O messenger, ask Rama to rescue me without any further delay. May your journey be safe!"

Hanuman than circumambulating took leave of Sita with a heavy heart.

The Clashes

Having achieved the main purpose of finding out Janaki, Hanuman thought of devising some means to ascertain Ravana's real strength. With this purpose in view, he decided to destroy Ashoka Grove. It would infuriate Ravana, thought Hanuman, and he would appear on the scene with his warriors and that would be a fit occasion for a trial of strength. Then before the eyes of *Rakshashis*, Hanuman grew formidable and destroyed the garden so violently that they scrambled away in fear to Ravana and reported the devastation. Inflamed with anger Ravana sent his heroic servants to capture Hanuman. Seeing them come Hanuman roared and lashed his tail shouting, "Victory to Rama." He snatched a heavy iron bar from the gate and beat them to death and a few survivors, beating a hasty retreat, reported the destruction and depredation of Ravana.

This time Ravana sent heroic Jambumali to punish the monkey.

Meanwhile, Hanuman had engaged himself in pulling down the temple. After destroying the temple, he it on fire. He broke off a huge pillar and spun it so violently that fire was produced by its friction.

At the sight of Jambumali coming on a chariot drawn by donkeys, Hanuman uprooted a huge tree and hurled it upon him, but Jambumali cut down that mighty tree with his sharp arrows. Hanuman then enraged, increased his stature and crushed Jambumali to pulp. Ravana saw it happen in his court with his magic and was infuriated, but soon collecting himself he told his commanders, "Go and secure the Vanara at once, but proceed cautiously, for he is not an ordinary Vanara. Take troops with you and capture the brute and then produce him before me."

They went in full force and saw Hanuman sitting atop the high entrance gate. They hurled missiles, shot arrows and Hanuman in reply hurled tall trees and pelted giant rocks with such fury and energy that they lay crushed and dead and a survivor fled in panic. The death of the fine and choicest commanders sent down a chill in Ravana's spine for the first time, but he kept smilling to hide his concern and fear and glanced meaningfully at his young son Akshaya. Akshaya came riding a shining chariot, eager to engage and defeat Hanuman in the battle. He found Hanuman sitting on the high battlement above the entrance. He struck him with his sharp snake like arrows and a fierce battle ensued. Hanuman praised young Akshaya's heroism but finally he decided to slay him and first make him chariotless and then catching hold of him by the legs, whirled round and round and then dashed him dead against the ground.

Akshaya's death alarmed Ravana and he called his son Indrajit, the conqueror of Indra and gods. "My heroic son! Go and secure that brute. Use the weapons you think best and be on your guard."

Indrajit, the effulgent son of Ravana, then proceeded on taking his chariot where Hanuman was. On seeing the heroic and the foremost of warriors coming towards him, Hanuman gave out a great roar and swelled further into a far more formidable size. Then a fierce battle raged for quite some time. Indrajit showered arrows upon

Hanuman and Hanuman avoided them by moving with the lightning speed. In the feats of war both were equal. The battle was delicately poised, then Indrajity finding his arrows not so effective resolved to use Brahmastra. As soon as he sent forth a Brahmastra, Hanuman fell on the ground bound invisibly hands and feet and helpless. Hanuman knew that he had been bound by the Brahmastra. Then many demons, who till then stood hiding at a safe distance, when they saw Hanuman bound and unable to move, surrounded him and expressed their joy by dancing and crying. They brought ropes and chains and bound him hard in their exultation.

Indrajit realised but too late to prevent this undoing of his labours by the mob. The physical bonds and chains had removed the effects of Brahmastra and Hanuman could spring himself free any moment. Brahmastra could not be used second time. Hanuman knew it but subjected himself to kicks, insults, belabouring and dragging in seeming helplessness, just in order to talk with Ravana face to face.

Lanka Aflame

Rakshashas jeered and booed, dragged and pulled Hanuman. People collected in the streets and market places and hurled insults and abuses towards him, while he was being carried before Ravana.

Ravana sat in state, radiating luster, amidst courtiers and counsellors. Hanuman wondered, "How mighty and beautiful! But how perverse!" Seeing heroic Hanuman, Ravana became impatient and at his command Prahasta asked Hanuman, "O Vanara, who are you and whence have you come? Has Indra sent you or Kubera or Yama or Varuna? Tell the truth or be sure of your death."

"I am Vanara Hanuman, an emissary of King Surgiva, the monkey king. I destroyed Ashoka Grove just to have a talk with Ravana. I killed the *Rakshashas* and their commanders in self-defence. Sugriva sends you his greetings. Rama, the eldest prince of Ayodhya, has made Sugriva the king after slaying Vail. In the absence of Rama and Lakshmana, Sita was abducted, and the Monkey King has sent search parties in all the directions.

Searching Sita, I came here and found her in Ashoka Grove. I, the son of Wind-god, tell you with due respect that you have committed a heinous crime by kidnapping Sita. I have seen her with my own eyes in Ashoka Grove. Certainly she is your doom. Return Sita to Rama Rama and repent or your end is near. You have undoubtedly mistken poison for food. All your merits earned by hard *tapas* will be consumed by the fire of your sins. Seek refuge unto Rama's feet. Your boons will not avail you before Rama's wrath.''

Hanuman gave this grim warning and Ravana's twenty eyes at once became red with anger and he shouted ''Cut off the villain's head.'' But then Vibhishana intervened, ''It is contrary to custom and righteousness to put an envoy to death. There are other punishments like branding, shaving or disfiguring sanctioned by tradition. You are wise, virtuous and well versed in politics and so reconsider your decision. You should rather kill Sugriva or Rama and not this puny messenger. Punish his master and show your valour.'' Very well'', said Ravana, ''then set his tail on fire. It will be an ideal punishment for it's a monkey's most cherished possession.''

The *Rakshashas* gave out a great shout of joy and wrapped Hanuman's tail in cotton-wool and rags soaked in oil, and then set it ablaze with a burning torch. And then heroic Hanuman snapped his bonds with a mighty jerk and sprang up a lofty gate and leapt from one mansion to another, setting them on fire with his blazing tail. In the mean time, the strong wind blew and the whole Lanka was aflame. It looked like a vast cremation ground engulfed in flames. Confusion and panic prevailed and wails of woe were heard all around.

Hanuman than ran to the top of the Trikuta hill and saw Lanka flickering brightly like a flame of dying lamp. Then he dipped his tail in the sea and put the fire out and thought, ''On! what have I done in my foolishness. What? I have burned Sita?'' Then he jumped back through smoke and steam and fled towards Ashoka Grove.

Sita sat under the Sinsapa tree unharmed. She looked attectionately

at Hanuman and said, "My son! your presence beguiles my suffering for the time being. I really admire your courage and intelligence. Come next with Rama soon, encourage him to rescue me."

Hanuman consoled and comforted Sita, said soothing words and assured her of Ravana's early destruction at Rama's hand and took leave of Sita. He came to the seashore, ascended the hill Arishta and leapt into the sky.

In the middle of his flight, he once again touched the Mainak mountain and sped like a dart. His mighty roars of joy echoed the four quarters. Vanaras, waiting on the seashore, heard his roars and rightly guessed that Hanuman had been successful in his endeavour and there they surrounded and welcomed him with fresh fruits and water. They offered him fresh bough to sit on. Angada embraced him and Jambavan smelt his head. Hanuman then said in detail what he had seen and done there in Lanka. Angada listened the tale of Sita's woe witth rapt attention and then sprang up full of wrath and said, "There are so many great warriors among us. Let us rescue Sita and return to Kishkindha with her."

Then veteran and wise Jambavan gently protested and said, "We are not authorised to attempt Sita's rescue. We have been asked to ascertain Sita's whereabouts only. We should follow Rama's directions."

All the Vanaras and bears agreed that was the right course of action and Angada ordered the host of monkeys to return. Then they leapt into the sky and flew home towards Kishkindha. Near Kishkindha they saw Sugriva's Honey Park full of honey wines. Dadhimukha, Sugriva's maternal uncle, guarded the garden. They entered and plundered the garden with Angada's permission. They drank from honey-combs to the excess, ate sweet scented flowers and fruits. In not time, they were fearlessly drunk and overindulging in revelry destroyed the park.

Unable to brook his plunder and depredation, Dadhimukha with his men hurried to Sugriva to complain. Sugriva was sitting with Rama and Lakshmana on the hill. Dadhimukha came, bowed before them

and said, "The Honey Park, so cherished by you, has been laid waste by Angada's army returning from south. Instead of paying any heed to my words, they have belaboured me. As a result of excessive revelry they are staggering or lying unconscious.

Sugriva at once understood its underlying meaning and turning to Rama said, "They have been crowned with success, they have found her and are celebrating their success in this manner."

Sugriva then said to Dadhimukha, "Be calm and send them straight here to us.'

Dadhimukha too now understood the real state of affairs, went back delighted and conveyed to them Sugriva's command. There upon they proceeded in haste to Prasarvana hill, where Sugriva, Rama and Lakshmana anxiously awaited their arrival.

Hanuman bowed before Rama, and gave him the crest-jewel of Sita and began, "O Rama! across the sea hundred leagues away stands Lanka, an island of Ravana. There Sita is imprisoned in Ashoka Grove, ever guarded by fierce Rakshashis. Ever devoted to you and meditating on you she has been living in constant fear and grief. She has given me this crest-jewel as a token to be presented to you. She narrated me how once a crow clawed her when you were asleep and how you hurled Brahmastra at it. She asked me to remind you of this happening. Ravana has threatened to kill her if she did not submit to him with in two months. Somehow she will keep herself alive for a month hoping your attack on Lanka, and then she would seek her own release through self-destruction. I gave her your signet-ring and she sent you thiscrest-jewel."

Hanuman gave Rama the jewl. Rama held jewel pressed to his heart and blessed heroic Hanuman again and again. He asked Hanuman to tell once more what Sita had said. Hanuman related the story, and Rama burst forth in tears and his hair stood on end, he embraced Hanuman.

Surya (The Sun)

In ancient India during Vedic age and even afterwards Surya has played a very significant role in Hindu mythology and amongst

Hindu gods.

Surya is one of the three chief gods of the Vedas. As one of the spheres, the physical sun is the celestial form of fire, Agni, and source of all life Surya is at the centre of the spheres. Above it are the unmanifest spheres of the Supreme Ruler and below it are the manifest spheres of the moon and the earth.

The other name of Surya is Savitri which means brilliance. In the later ages, like other many Vedic gods, this god became more or less a mythical figure superseded by Vishnu, who came to be regarded by Hindus as the supreme manifestation of the self-Existent—the Supreme God.

Still the most celebrated mantra (hymn), known as Gayatree Mantra, is the incantation addressed to Surya. Also many of the forms of meditation, prayers and rituals used in the daily ceremonies of Hindu Brahmins are meant to be addressed to this god. Daily in the morning one can see hundreds of Hindus offering water to the rising sun, accompanied with incantations. Women can be seen frequently taking a pledge that in case Surya bestows them with a son, they would be regularly performing such and such ceremony to worship this god. A legend states that about three hundred years ago a learned Hindu, who was suffering from leprosy, prayed to Surya for cure. He was inspired to write eight verses in Sanskrit, known as Suryashtak, to please the god, and by the time he had finished the last verse he was restored to health. Worship of the god Surya is performed standing in the sun with clasped hands and closed eyes. The origin of this method of obtaining relief from sickness is ascribed to Shambu, the son of Krishna, who was directed in a dream to repeat twice a day the twenty-one names of Surya standing in this manner.

Surya has two wives, Suvarna and Chhaya. The first one is the daughter of Vishwakarma. After her marriage she found that she could not bear the power of this god's rays. She, therefore, made an image of her own, imparted life to it and left it with Surya. Later on she was turned into a mare and adopted by Surya again.

The abode of this god is called as Surya Loka. A powerful race of

Hindu kings has always taken pride in calling itself as the direct descendant of Surya. In this dynasty of Surya Vanshis the first King had been Ikshwakoo while god Ram was the sixty sixth king in this lineage. Even till medieval ages and thereafter so many Rajput kings connected their family with Surya.

Surya has several sons. The law giver, Manu, the lord of death, Yama and the river Yamuna were born of Suvarna. According to Mahabharat, the great warrior Karan was this god's illegitimate son by Kunti, the mother of Pandavas. Surya is also the father of the monkey chief, Sugriv, who was the ally of Lord Ram.

Chhandogya Upanishad says that at the time of creation the world's segg divided itself into two parts, the one of silver and the other of gold. The silver part became the earth, the golden part the sky. The outer cover of the egg became the mountains, the inner cover the clouds and snow, the inside veins became the rivers and the liquid in the egg became the ocean. When the sun appeared there was a great cry from which all the beings and all their pleasures were born. Hence at his rising and setting, cries and songs are heard, all beings and desires rise toward it. Those who worship the sun as the Absolute ever hear beautiful sounds and are filled with joy.

The well-known horses of Surya are mentioned in Rig Veda, which says "May Surya with its seven horses arrive". The sun sits on a lotus in his chariot of seven golen mares. Sometimes the chariot has only one horse with seven heads surrounded with rays. Surya's charioteer is Aruna (the red one), who is the wise elder brother of Garuda, the vehicle of Vishnu, and is also the deity of dawn. He stands on the chariot in front of the Sun, and his strong and vast body shelters the world from Surya'a fury.

He is worshipped by various names like Procreator (Savitar), Lord-of-the-Day (Aharpati), Eye-of-the-World (Jagat Chakshu), Witness-of Deeds (Karma Sakshin) or Lord-of-Seven Horses (Saptashva).

Though small images or visual representations of this god can be seen in bit temples of other gods, Surya has only one full- fledged temple dedicated to it. It is the famous temple of Sun God at

Konarak in Orissa. The structural peculiarity of this shrine is that it is built mainly of blocks of laterite without the use of mortar. The blocks are all held together by a system of poise and balance—a masterpiece of the science of architecture. In this temple the weight of one stone acts against the pressure of another, much of the stability being a matter of balance and equilibrium. The temple was built in the thirteenth century A.D. but seems to have been later abandoned for some unknown reasons.

The Solar Eclipse and also the Lunar Eclipse have also their interesting mythological explanation. After the Great Churining of the Sea, when the gods and demons began to fight for nectar, Lord Vishnu adopted the form of an enchanting lady, Mohini, and began to pour nectar down the throat of the gods. One of the demons saw throught this game of Vishnu and mingled with the gods adopting their guise. Then the moon-god and the pointed at the demon's cunningness and Vishnu hacked off his head by his disc Sudarshan. But by that time the demon had the nectar in his throat. So, despite the hacking off his head, his head and the trunk. remained independently alive and came to be known as the Dragon's Head or Rahu and the Dragon's Tail or Ketu respectively. At the time of the eclipse Rahu is said to swallow the moon and Ketu, the sun out of their constant animosity.

Svadha (*invoked with offerings*)

Minor goddess. Hindu. The daughter of Daksa and Prasuti. Sometimes identified as a consort of Rudra or Agni.

Savaraghosaraja

Physican god. Buddhist-Lamaist [Tibet]. Accounted amongst a series of medicine *buddhas* or *sMan-bla.* Typically depicted with stretched ear-lobes. Colour: yellowish red.

Svasthavesini (*entering a natural state*)

Goddess. Hindu. One of terrifying appearance. Colour: scarlet. Attribute: drum. Three-eyed and three-headed.

Svati

Minor goddess of fortune. Hindu (Epic and Puranic). A benevolent

naksatra; daughter of Daksa and wife of Candra (Soma). Also Nistya.

Swastika & Hinduism

The symbol Swastika (luck or well-being in Sanskrit) is a symbol of Aryan culture of Hindusim. It is an auspicious symbol for Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. It has been found on Byzantine buildings, Celtic monuments and on Greek coins. It is even found in some American Indian burialgrounds in the U.S.A.

The figure Swastika is in the form of a Greek cross with ends of the arms bent at right angles. The right-handed Swastika moves in clock-wise direction and the left-haned Swastika moves in a counter-clockwise direction. This symbol creates an impression of perpetual motion. The right-handed (clock-wise) Swastika is considered a solar symbol or a fire symbol. The Hindus and Jains draw Swastika marks on books, doors, offerings etc. The left-handed Swastika sometiems is considered an evil omen.

Usually all Swastikas are white on a black background, but during the Nazi regime, a black left-handed, titled Swastika or "Hakenkreuz" became the characteristic emblem of the Nazi party. Any-way today Swastika is the most hated symbol in the world. Nobody can say for sure whether it was the misuse of Hindu Swastika's power that caused the "Rise and fall of Adolf Hitler".

Syamatara (*the 'black Tara'*)

Goddess. Buddhist-Lamaist [Tibet]. A gracious form of the goddess Tara. Also an emanation of Amoghasiddhi and a form of Avalokitesyara. Colour: black, possibly green. Attribute: blue lotus.

Sunil Sehgal is a seasoned researcher in Hinduism. He did his M.A. in History. He became Sadhu for a decade and visited many temples, and holy places throughout India and during this period he compiled this encyclopaedia. At present he is living in Kangra and serving the poor.

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